

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 472 637

EA 032 303

AUTHOR Faddis, Bonnie J.; Beam, Margaret; Hahn, Karen J.; Willardson, Marlyn; Sipe, Deborah; Ahrens-Gray, Paul

TITLE The Implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program: The Work of 40 Schools in Seven Midwest States.

INSTITUTION RMC Research Corp., Portland, OR.; North Central Regional Educational Lab., Naperville, IL.

SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.

PUB DATE 2000-11-00

NOTE 150p.; For related document, see EA 032 311.

CONTRACT RJ96006301

AVAILABLE FROM North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200, Naperville, IL 60563. Tel: 630-649-6500; Tel: 800-356-2735 (Toll Free); Fax: 630-649-6700; e-mail: info@ncrel.org; Web site: <http://www.ncrel.org>. For full text: <http://www.ncrel.org/csri/respub/dempro40/dempro40.pdf>.

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Case Studies; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; *Program Implementation

IDENTIFIERS *Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program

ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Program was established through Public Law 105-78, the 1998 Department of Education Appropriations Act. CSRD provides financial assistance to underachieving schools implementing comprehensive school-reform programs that are based on reliable research and effective practices. It intends to stimulate reform by incorporating a comprehensive reform design, support within the school, measurable goals for student performance, effective research-based methods and strategies, professional development, external technical support and assistance, parental and community involvement, coordination of resources, and evaluation strategies. This study used case studies of 40 schools and a written survey distributed to principals and selected teachers in CSRD schools to examine CSRD implementation. Most schools examined served high-poverty, highly mobile populations with large concentrations of non-Caucasian students. School staff generally supported comprehensive school-reform efforts. Most schools were able to coordinate different funding resources to support reform efforts. Achievement of success was challenged where high principal and teacher turnover made it difficult to maintain the momentum of the reform, or changes in external assistance providers slowed progress. Further study is needed to determine whether and how these schools can sustain their reform momentum. Three appendices contain data-collection instruments for different site visits. (Contains 35 exhibits.) (RT)

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The Implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program

The Work of 40 Schools in Seven Midwest States

November 2000

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The Implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program

The Work of 40 Schools in Seven Midwest States

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Prepared by
**Bonnie J. Faddis
Margaret Beam
Karen J. Hahn
Marlyn Willardson
Deborah Sipe
Paul Ahrens-Gray**

RMC Research Corporation
522 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 1407
Portland, OR 97204



1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200
Naperville, Illinois 60563-1486
(800) 356-2735 • (630) 649-6500
www.ncrel.org

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Contents

Exhibits.....	vii
Introduction	1
Description of the Sample Sites	5
Sample School Demographics	6
Other School Characteristics.....	8
Turnover.....	9
Principal Experience	10
Status of the Nine Components of School Reform	11
Comprehensive Reform Design With Aligned Components	11
Support Within the School	16
Measurable Goals and Benchmarks	19
Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies.....	24
Professional Development.....	30
External Technical Assistance	36
Parent and Community Involvement.....	43
Coordination of Resources	45
Evaluation Strategies.....	47
Summary and Issues for Further Study	53
Conclusion.....	56
Appendix A: Data Collection Instruments for the First Site Visit	
Appendix B: Data Collection Instruments for the Second Site Visit	
Appendix C: Data Collection Instruments for the Third Site Visit	

Exhibits

Exhibit 1	Data-Collection Activities by Site Visit.....	3
Exhibit 2	Number of CSRD Schools by State	4
Exhibit 3	Sample School Sites by Grade Level and Geographic Location	6
Exhibit 4	Average Sample School Size	7
Exhibit 5	Minority Enrollment in Sample Schools.....	8
Exhibit 6	Sample School Sites by Title I Program Status.....	9
Exhibit 7	Principal Experience at Sample Schools.....	10
Exhibit 8	Percentage of Comprehensive School Reform Plans That Addressed Key Reform Elements.....	13
Exhibit 9	Summary of School Reform Models.....	14
Exhibit 10	Schools' Efforts to Involve Staff in Comprehensive School Reform	18
Exhibit 11	Parties Responsible for Schools' Decision to Implement Reform Model	18
Exhibit 12	Methods Schools Used to Gather Information About Reform Models.....	19
Exhibit 13	Changes in Method of Assessing Goal Attainment	21
Exhibit 14	Alignment of School Goals With State, District, or Other Standards.....	22
Exhibit 15	Parties Responsible for Monitoring School Goal Attainment.....	23
Exhibit 16	Use of Goals and Benchmarks to Guide Instruction	23
Exhibit 17	Effective Research-Based Strategies Used	25
Exhibit 18	Types of Curricular Change	26
Exhibit 19	Changes in Instructional Strategies or Grouping	27
Exhibit 20	Changes in Learning Theory or Pedagogical Approach	28
Exhibit 21	School Governance or Management Changes	29

Exhibit 22	Teacher Implementation of New Curriculum or Instructional Strategies	33
Exhibit 23	School Staff Participation in Professional Development	34
Exhibit 24	Hours School Staff Spent in Professional Development	32
Exhibit 25	The Professional Development Areas Schools Focused On	33
Exhibit 26	Professional Development Topics.....	34
Exhibit 27	Barriers to Effective Professional Development.....	35
Exhibit 28	Primary Sources of External Technical Assistance.....	37
Exhibit 29	Sources of Supplemental Technical Assistance	39
Exhibit 30	Technical Assistance Provided by State Education Agencies	41
Exhibit 31	CSRD Grant Funds Schools Utilized for External Technical Assistance	42
Exhibit 32	Methods Used to Increase Parent Involvement.....	45
Exhibit 33	Other Funding Sources for Comprehensive School Reform.....	46
Exhibit 34	Data Schools Utilized to Evaluate Student Learning	49
Exhibit 35	Percent of Schools That Utilized Student Assessment Data	51

Introduction

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Program was established through Public Law 105-78, the 1998 Department of Education Appropriations Act. CSRD provides financial assistance to underachieving schools implementing comprehensive school reform programs that are based on reliable research and effective practices. The program intends to stimulate comprehensive, schoolwide reform by incorporating nine specific components:

- **A comprehensive reform design** that aligns the school's curriculum, technology, and professional development to enable all students to meet challenging state content and performance standards.
- **Support within the school** from teachers, administrators, and other staff.
- **Measurable goals for student performance** and benchmarks for meeting the goals.
- **Effective research-based methods and strategies** for teaching and school management.
- **Professional development.**
- **External technical support and assistance** from an entity with expertise in schoolwide reform and improvement.
- **Parental and community involvement** in planning and implementing school improvement activities.
- **Coordination of resources** (federal, state, and local) to support and sustain the school reform effort.
- **Evaluation strategies** for evaluating the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.

The U.S. Department of Education made CSRD funding available under two separate authorities: Section 1502 (Demonstration of Innovative Practices) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE) in Part A of Title X of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. For fiscal year 1998, Congress appropriated \$120 million under Title I and \$25 million under Title X for state CSRD program

grants. Funds became available on July 1, 1998. State education agencies received funds proportionate to their share of Title I funds and the number of school-aged children they serve. These state education agencies awarded subgrants to schools on a competitive basis. Only schools eligible to receive funds under Title I, Part A were eligible for section 1502 funds, but any school could receive Title X funds. Each funded school was to receive a minimum of \$50,000 per year for up to three years.

This study uses two basic methods to examine CSRD implementation in the region served by the federal North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL): in-depth case studies of a sample of 40 schools and a written survey distributed to principals and selected teachers in all CSRD schools in the region. This report is based on the case studies.

For the case studies, NCREL staff drew from each state a roughly proportionate sample of schools to be involved in a series of three site visits aimed at describing the comprehensive school reform implementation process. The study focused on the nine components of school reform described in the legislation, the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of comprehensive school reform, the types of assistance schools receive from their reform model providers and other technical assistance providers, and the ways in which schools integrate their comprehensive school reform efforts with other state and local reform efforts. NCREL selected schools that proportionally represented urban, suburban, and rural schools, as well as elementary, middle, and high schools.

The evaluation team conducted three rounds of site visits to the 40 schools involved in the case study in January and February 2000 (two days), April and May 2000 (one day), and September and October 2000 (two days). To the extent possible, the same site visitor conducted all three visits to a given school. Exhibit 1 shows the data-collection activities completed during each of the three site visits.

Exhibit 1
Data-Collection Activities by Site Visit

Data Source	Site Visit 1	Site Visit 2	Site Visit 3
Principal Interview	X	X	X
Leadership Team Focus Group		X	X
Teacher Interviews or Focus Group	X	X	X
District Staff Interview	X	X	X
External Assistance Provider Interview	X	X	X
Parent Interviews or Focus Group	X		
Student Focus Group		X	
Classroom Observation	X	X	X
Staff Development Form	X	X	x

Each set of focus group or interview questions revolved around the implementation of the nine components of comprehensive school reform. In addition, site visitors collected copies of CSRD grant applications, school improvement plans, demographic data, documentation of professional development activities, and other background information from each school. The site visitors arranged the one- or two-day site visits with each school principal after providing the principals with written information concerning the purposes of the study and the types of data-collection activities to be included in each site visit. The site visitors left the scheduling of each data-collection activity to the discretion of the school principals. Exhibit 2 displays the number of schools that received CSRD funds in each of the states in the NCREL region and the number of schools that were selected for the series of site visits.

Exhibit 2
Number of CSRD Schools by State

State	No. of CSRD schools funded ^a	No. of CSRD schools sampled	Percent of CSRD schools sampled
Illinois	109	9	8%
Indiana	12	2	17%
Iowa	10	2	20%
Ohio	84	10	12%
Michigan	75	10	13%
Minnesota	25	3	12%
Wisconsin	33	4	12%
Total	348	40	11%

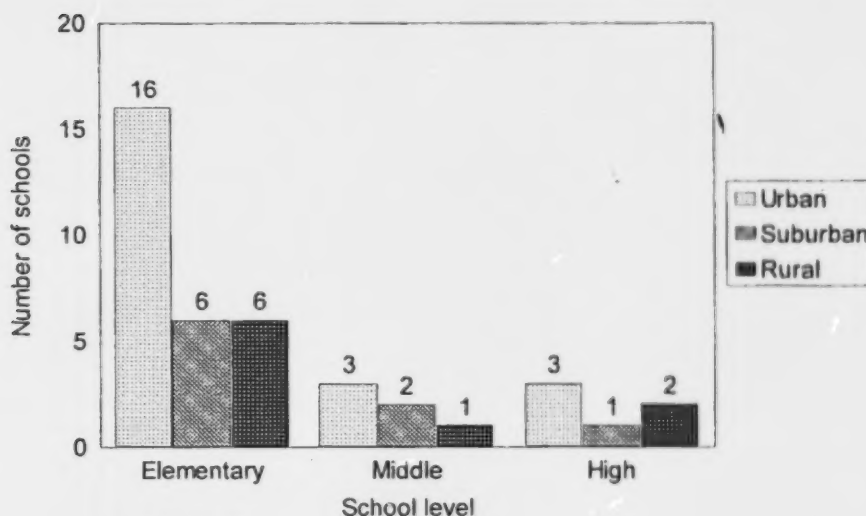
^aData obtained from the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory database at www.sedl.org; these data include schools funded as of December 1999.

Copies of the site-visit data-collection instruments are in Appendixes A, B, and C.

Description of the Sample Sites

NCREL selected the sample sites for this study from the 348 Midwest schools that had received CSRD funding as of December 1999. The sample mix represented both the range of grade levels served (elementary, middle, and high school) and geographic location (urban, suburban, and rural). The study team classified schools serving kindergarten through Grade 8 or kindergarten through Grade 6 (or any subset thereof) as elementary schools, schools serving Grades 6 through 8 or Grades 7 and 8 as middle schools, and schools serving Grades 7 through 12 or Grades 9 through 12 as high schools. National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) locale codes of 1 and 2 (large or mid-size city) were designated as urban, codes of 3 and 4 (urban fringes of large or mid-size cities) were designated as suburban, and codes of 5, 6, and 7 (large town, small town, and rural) were designated as rural. The study team visited at least one urban, suburban, and rural school at each level. Exhibit 3 portrays the sample school distribution by grade level and geographic location. The geographic diversity represented by the sites was intended to help the study team identify issues and concerns that might be distinct to particular types of schools (e.g., urban elementary schools) and might influence the design and implementation of school reform efforts.

Exhibit 3
Sample School Sites by Grade Level and Geographic Location



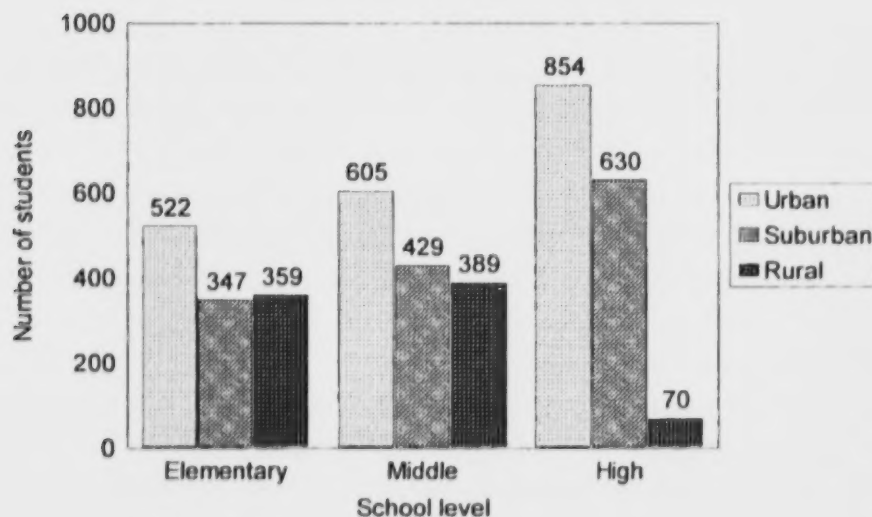
The sample sites varied widely in terms of their demographics. Many of the schools were located in densely populated urban neighborhoods with large minority populations and high-poverty rates. Often, in both urban and rural settings, the school was the center of activity in the community. This section examines various aspects of the sample schools and provides information on their similarities and differences.

Sample School Demographics

Exhibit 4 illustrates the average school enrollment for each type of site. School enrollment sizes varied widely, from 40 students in a rural high school to over 1,000 students in an urban elementary school. For the sample sites, the mean enrollment in the urban elementary schools was 522, with enrollment figures ranging from 207 to 1,140 students. The mean enrollments in the suburban and rural elementary schools were considerably lower at 347 and 359 students, respectively. Suburban elementary schools ranged in size from 223 to 426 students, and rural elementary schools ranged from 84 to 583 students. The six middle schools ranged in size from 200 to 730 students, with an average enrollment of 511. The two rural high schools were quite small, averaging 70 students, and the suburban high school served 630 students. The three urban

high schools served an average of 854 students but varied greatly in size: one school served 1,375 students, whereas the other two each served less than half that number.

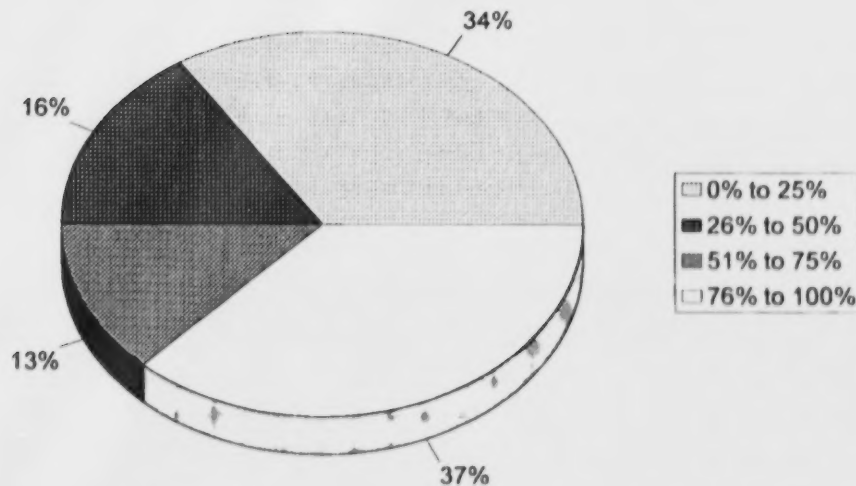
Exhibit 4
Average Sample School Size



Note. N = 40.

Exhibit 5 illustrates the distribution of minority students in the sample schools. Overall, an average of 52 percent of the students were non-Caucasian. However, the demographic makeup varied greatly across the sites. Exhibit 5 shows that in 34 percent of the schools, non-Caucasian students composed less than one-fourth of the total student enrollment. Yet in 37 percent of the schools, non-Caucasian students composed over three-fourths of the total student enrollment. For the 18 schools with more than half non-Caucasian enrollment, 16 were predominantly African-American and two were predominantly Latino.

Exhibit 5
Minority Enrollment in Sample Schools



Note. n = 38.

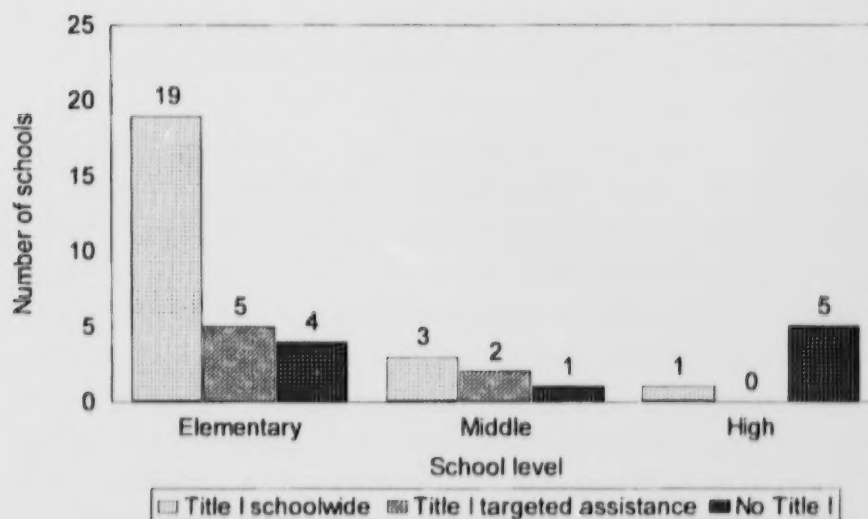
Other School Characteristics

On average, 63 percent of the students in the sample schools received free or reduced-price lunches (percentages by school ranged from 9% to 99%). The student mobility rate ranged from 2 percent to 65 percent, averaging 27 percent, and the average daily attendance rate was 90 percent. The percentage of students with individualized educational plans (IEPs) ranged from 0 percent to 28 percent, with an average of 12 percent. In 21 of the 37 schools for which we have data, no students were classified as English language learners (ELL) or limited English proficient (LEP). In the other 16 schools, on average, 8 percent of the students were classified as ELL or LEP; the range was from 1 to 61 percent.

One factor that can directly impact school reform efforts is the amount and type of federal funding available to a school, because these funds can be coordinated with CSRD funds to enhance school improvement efforts. The study team gathered data regarding the number of schools receiving Title I funding and whether the schools used that funding to provide targeted assistance or to implement schoolwide projects. Exhibit 6 shows that 19 of the 28 elementary schools in the sample implemented Title I schoolwide programs and five had Title I targeted

assistance programs. Five of the six middle schools received Title I funding and three of these schools implemented Title I schoolwide projects. Only one of the high schools received Title I funding; that school implemented a Title I schoolwide project.

Exhibit 6
Sample School Sites by Title I Program Status



Note. $N = 40$.

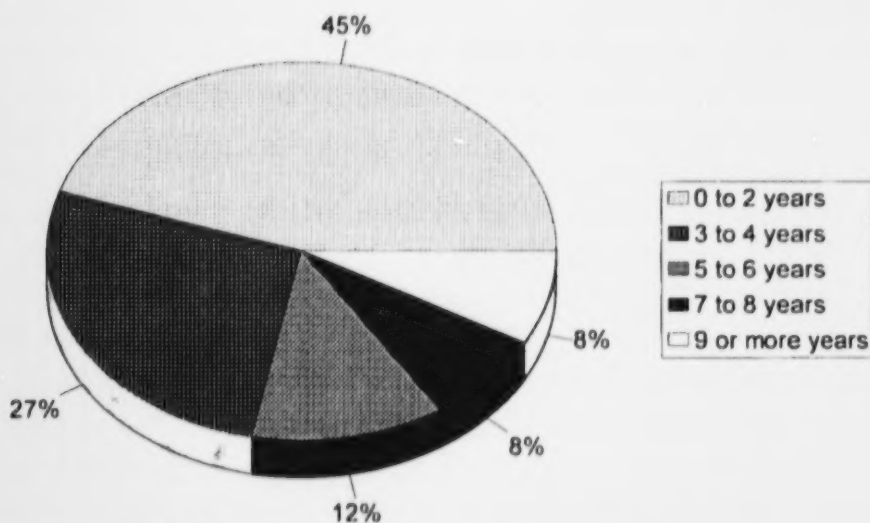
Turnover

When a school implements new instructional models or approaches, several factors can be critically important to the success of the implementation, including the administration and teaching staff turnover rate. High turnover can slow down or stall the implementation process. In the 38 schools with available data, the average teacher turnover rate over the two-year period from 1998 to 2000 was 14 percent, ranging from 1 to 33 percent. Almost one-quarter of the sample sites had new principals in the 1999–2000 school year, and 15 percent of the schools experienced a change in school leadership in 2000–2001. No differences in staff turnover rates were evident across schools by grade level or geographic location.

Principal Experience

Principal experience can be an important factor in the success of school reform efforts. Exhibit 7 illustrates that 72 percent of the school principals at the 40 sample schools had been in their positions for fewer than five years, and 45 percent had held their positions for two years or less. Only 16 percent had held their positions for more than six years. Most principals did, however, have considerable experience in their districts: half had 16 or more years of experience in their districts, and another 25 percent had 6 to 15 years of experience in their districts.

Exhibit 7
Principal Experience at Sample Schools



Note. N = 40.

Status of the Nine Components of School Reform

According to the CSRD legislation, a school receiving program funds must integrate all nine of the comprehensive school reform components promoted by CSRD. Schools implementing a reform model that does not address all nine components were expected to incorporate the missing components into their overall approach to reform. This section summarizes the status of each of the nine comprehensive school reform components for which data were available from the 40 sample schools (28 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, and 6 high schools).

Comprehensive Reform Design With Aligned Components

The CSRD legislation defines this component as follows:

The program has a comprehensive design for effective school functioning, including instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management that aligns the school's curriculum, technology, and professional development into a schoolwide reform plan designed to enable all students—including children from low-income families, children with limited English proficiency, and children with disabilities—to meet challenging state content and performance standards. The program also addresses needs identified through a school needs assessment.¹

This component encompasses several requirements:

- The school must have a written plan.
- The plan must be comprehensive. That is, the plan must address instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management.
- The plan's curriculum, technology, and professional development components must be aligned with each other.

¹Applications for state grants under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program, 1998.
www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform/csrdapp.html

- The plan enables all students to meet state content and performance standards.
- The plan addresses the needs identified through a school needs assessment.

In addition to a comprehensive school reform plan, the study team found that 64 percent of the schools had a Title I schoolwide project plan; 51 percent had a district-mandated school improvement; 31 percent had a state-mandated improvement plan; and 26 percent had some other improvement plan. Half of the schools had made minor changes to their original comprehensive school reform plans; 37 percent had not made any changes to their original plans; and 13 percent had made significant changes to their original plans. There were no evident differences in the level of changes made to the comprehensive school reform plans across the schools by grade level, geographic location, or reform model type.

Nearly all of the comprehensive school reform plans (90%) used a school needs assessment to identify needs, and two-thirds of the plans addressed how all students (including special populations) would be assisted in meeting state content and performance standards. Exhibit 8 shows the proportion of comprehensive school reform plans that addressed various school improvement elements. The most common elements, addressed by at least 80 percent of the comprehensive school reform plans, were instructional strategies, professional development, assessment, curriculum, and parent involvement. Of the 40 schools, one school addressed only one key reform element; 19 schools addressed four to six elements; and 20 schools addressed seven to nine reform elements.

Exhibit 8
Percentage of Comprehensive School Reform Plans
That Addressed Key Reform Elements

Reform element	Percent of plans including
Instructional strategies	95%
Professional development	95%
Assessment	92%
Curriculum	85%
Parent involvement	80%
School management	67%
Technology	59%
Classroom management	54%
Other	18%

Note. *N* = 40.

The study team asked school staff to estimate how much of their comprehensive school reform plans had been implemented thus far. Nearly two-thirds of the schools had implemented most (more than 75%) or all elements of their comprehensive school reform plans; only 16 percent had implemented fewer than half of their plan elements. No differences in the proportion of implemented plan elements were evident across schools by grade level, geographic location, model type, or rated strength of principal leadership.

Exhibit 9 presents the 26 reform models selected by the 40 sample schools organized into three categories: curriculum-focused reforms, principle-based reforms, and school improvement processes or frameworks. These categories roughly represent a continuum from specific curricula as the basis for reform to general school change planning models.

- The majority (54%) of the reform models were in the principle-based reforms category. These models usually contained some process elements, such as needs assessments and comprehensive planning but also featured specific instructional practices that are believed to enhance student learning. Schools at all levels implemented principle-based reform models. In fact, all of the high schools in the sample implemented this type of model.

- The curriculum-focused reforms category represented 31 percent of the reform models and included elementary schools only.
- The school improvement processes model category represented 15 percent of the reform models and included both elementary and middle schools.

Four of the 26 reform models implemented by the 40 sample schools were identified as “locally developed.” These schools either combined more than one reform model or created their own approach by combining specific curriculum, instructional, or organizational practices that addressed their needs.

Exhibit 9
Summary of School Reform Models

Model Name	Model Focus	Frequency ^a
Curriculum-focused reform models		
Everyday Math	University of Chicago mathematics curriculum	1 E
Early Literacy Learning Initiative	Language arts and science	1 E
Galaxy Classroom Science		
Breakthrough to Literacy	Big books, computer modules	1 E
Success for All	Strategies and structures for teaching reading	1 E
Integrated Thematic Instruction	Themes to plan and organize instruction	1 E
Reading Renaissance	Strategies for teaching reading	1 E
Locally developed	Literacy, mathematics, multiage grouping	1 E
Principle-based reform models		
Micro Society	Real-world learning experiences in 6 strands (technology, economy, academy, government, arts, heart)	1 E
Center for Urban Education (DePaul Univ.)	Instructional planning, professional development, parent involvement	1 E, 1 H
School Achievement Structure (DePaul Univ.)	Sizemore's 10 routines (e.g., assessment, monitoring, discipline, instruction, professional development)	2 E
Co-NECT	Project-based learning, teacher collaboration, technology	4 E, 1 H
Expeditionary Learning-Outward Bound	In-depth exploration of topics or themes	1 E, 1 H
Modern Red Schoolhouse	School autonomy, challenging curriculum, technology, individual education compacts, parent and community involvement	1 E
High Scope	Key experiences, plan-do-review process, active learning,	1 E

Model Name	Model Focus	Frequency ^a
	manipulatives	
Effective Schools	Planning model with seven components (mission, leadership, monitoring, high expectations, basic skills, school climate, home-school relationships)	1 E
Middle Start	Needs assessment and planning model with focus on instructional strategies	3 M
Coalition of Essential Schools (Sizer)	10 principles (e.g., focus on learning, mastery, personalized learning)	1 E, 1 H
Community Learning Centers	Community-based learning, technology	1 H
High Schools That Work	Improving achievement of career-bound students through 10 key practices (e.g., high expectations, more challenging academic courses, use of assessment data)	1 H
Locally developed	Standards-based curriculum, instructional strategies, professional development, collaborative school governance	1 E
Locally developed	Lightspan computer software for home and school use, School Improvement Partnership	1 E
Locally developed	Multiage grouping, computers, cooperative learning, project-based learning, team teaching	1 E
School improvement process or framework reform models		
School Development Program (Comer)	Comprehensive planning process	2 E, 1 M
Accelerated Schools (Levin)	Needs assessment, vision, priorities, inquiry process, implementing solutions, assessing results	2 E, 1 M
Standard Bearer for School Improvement	Future orientation, design and focus, strategic action	1 E
Turning Points Middle School Reform Model	School climate, technology, teaming	1 M

^aE = Elementary school, M = Middle school, H = High school.

About 72 percent of the sample schools were implementing a primary reform model that defined their comprehensive school reform approach; 13 percent were implementing multiple reform activities that constituted a comprehensive approach to school reform; 10 percent were implementing more than one reform model, and 8 percent were implementing multiple reform activities that did not constitute a comprehensive school reform approach. Further, 40 percent of the schools visited had already begun to implement their model or reform activities prior to receiving CSRD funding. No differences in approach to comprehensive school reform were evident across schools across by grade level, geographic location, model type, Title I status, or rated strength of principal leadership.

Support Within the School

Support from teachers, the principal, and other staff members within the school is essential to the maximal effectiveness of a comprehensive school reform effort. Conversely, lack of support from one or more entities within a school can hinder reform progress. This section describes the level of support by staff members across the 39 sample schools for which data were available. Principals and teachers at each school provided percentages of staff members currently involved in the reform model implementation effort at their school. Across the sample, principals reported that on average 90 percent of the school staff members were implementing the selected comprehensive school reform model. Teachers responded similarly. On average, teachers believed that 87 percent of staff members were implementing the selected comprehensive school reform model. Sixty-four percent of the principals and 47 percent of the teachers reported that all teachers were involved in CSR implementation. Twenty-six percent of the principals and 45 percent of the teachers reported between 50 and 99 percent of the teachers were involved, and only 10 percent of principals and 8 percent of teachers reported less than 50-percent teacher involvement. In only 3 of the 36 schools with estimates from both principals and teachers were the discrepancies between them greater than 20 percent.

The study team used information from the site-visit interviews to offer possible explanations for the low levels of staff support and involvement at certain schools. Based on teacher reports, schools were grouped into three categories according to the level of staff involved in reform model implementation: (1) schools with less than 80-percent staff involvement ($n=7$), (2) schools with 80-percent to 90-percent staff involvement ($n=11$), and (3) schools with greater than 90-percent staff involvement ($n=21$). Schools with less than 80-percent staff involvement reported a variety of reasons for the resistance of some staff. For example, at one school, problems external to the reform plan itself were the primary foci of teachers' concerns, and teachers paid little attention to the reform efforts. A couple of schools lacked staff cohesion—that is, staff members were strongly divided among those who supported the comprehensive school reform plan and those who felt the plan was unnecessary and a waste of time. In several schools, teachers reported that staff other than the school leadership team should be included in reform decisions. In one school, staff cohesion was present, but several staff members commented that the simultaneous implementation of another program was interfering with their comprehensive

school reform implementation effort. Teachers at some schools reported that staff training was repetitive and noninstructive or that they were not receiving the guidance or time to implement new strategies in the classroom.

In contrast, several common themes existed among schools whose staff support for the selected comprehensive school reform plan was highest. In the majority of these schools, the level of staff collaboration in planning instruction was consistently high. Also, in most of these schools, teachers were instrumental in the selection or development of the reform plan. Many of these schools scheduled weekly or monthly staff meetings to plan activities and implement strategies, discuss students' progress, or discuss topics relevant to instruction or other reform issues. Teachers at these schools generally reported having more opportunities to expand their roles, try new techniques, and enhance instruction in the classroom. Teachers and students at these schools also tended to exhibit a high level of awareness of the selected reform model.

Staff involvement is critical to reform success. Thus, school staff strove to involve all staff in the comprehensive school reform process. Exhibit 10 shows the percentage of schools that used various efforts to involve staff. The most popular methods for involving all staff in the comprehensive school reform process were providing additional training, promoting committee involvement, enlisting the involvement of key school staff, and providing peer coaching or assistance.

Exhibit 10
Schools' Efforts to Involve Staff in Comprehensive School Reform

Effort	Percent of Schools Using
Additional training for staff	54%
Involvement of staff through committees	38%
Enlisting involvement of key staff	31%
Peer coaching or assistance	26%
Written commitment from staff	15%
Use of results to show effectiveness	15%
Transfer of nonsupporters to other schools	13%
Other	13%

Note. $n = 39$

Exhibit 11 shows which individuals were responsible for the decision to implement the sample schools' selected reform models. In 32 percent of the schools, the principal and school leadership team were the primary decisionmakers in the process, and in 29 percent of the schools, the entire staff was involved in the decision-making process. No association between the level of staff involvement in plan implementation and the persons responsible for the initial decision were evident. Additional analyses revealed no differences in staff involvement across the schools by geographic location, Title I status, or grade level.

Exhibit 11
Parties Responsible for Schools' Decision to Implement Reform Model

Primary decisionmaker of model selection	Percent of schools
The principal and leadership team or other selected group of teachers	32%
The entire staff	29%
Decision made outside the school, e.g. district administration	21%
The principal acting alone	8%
Other	10%

Note. $n = 38$.

Exhibit 12 shows the percentage of sample schools that used various methods of gathering information about the reform model prior to selection. Primary methods of information gathering across the sample included reading research information related to the model (54%) and attending a conference (44%). There were no evident differences in the methods that schools used when it came to level of staff involvement. Additional tests revealed no differences across schools by geographic location, Title I status, or grade level.

Exhibit 12
Methods Schools Used to Gather Information About Reform Models

Method of gathering information	Percent of schools using
Reading research information related to this model	54%
Attendance at a conference	44%
Presentation by model provider	23%
Visit to school(s) implementing model	20%
District selected model	15%
Other	18%

Note. $N = 39$.

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

Comprehensive school reform must involve a clear set of goals and benchmarks to ensure that all stakeholders know specifically which goals the school is trying to accomplish and to what degree the school has met these goals. Often, reform models require schools to examine and revise their existing goals or to develop new goals consistent with the model being implemented. Many curriculum-based reform models, such as Breakthrough to Literacy and Success for All, introduce new content or teaching methods that require schools to establish new goals. Many principle-based reform models—such as Effective Schools, Co-NECT, and Middle Start—place high priority on the adoption of clear goals and benchmarks. Much of the initial work of implementing these reform models involves clarifying what the school is trying to accomplish and specifying the benchmarks the school will use to determine adequate progress.

The majority of the goals established by CSRD schools involve increasing student achievement in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Some CSRD schools' goals also address student

achievement in areas such as science and social studies. The most common methods the schools use to assess these areas are standardized tests and statewide assessment programs. Some schools also use locally developed instruments, such as portfolios, journals, student exhibitions, and rubrics. Or they use commercial assessments, such as the Work Sampling System. Many schools have developed additional goals associated with student success in school, including improved student attendance, student behavior, and parent involvement. Other goals developed by CSRD schools involve intermediate outcomes, such as providing professional development, aligning curricula, and acquiring teaching materials and technology.

Many of the goals established by CSRD schools are expressed in terms of desired student achievement scores, attendance levels, or levels of parent involvement in school programs. Some schools have identified desired student achievement score levels with descriptors, such as *developing*, *competent*, *proficient*, and *accomplished*. The schools express the benchmarks related to these descriptors in various ways. One method is to increase the number or percentage of students expected to attain the higher levels each year. For example, a school in which only 30 percent of the students are at the proficient level might set benchmarks to raise this percentage by 10 points each year until 90 percent of the students achieve at or above that level. Another method is to raise the achievement score level needed to attain each benchmark every year. For instance, a designation of proficient may require a test score of 50 the first year, a score of 60 the second year, and so on. A third method is to establish several benchmarks and designate the number of benchmarks that must be met each year. For instance, one state has established 27 benchmarks of school effectiveness, and a school must meet at least 25 of these benchmarks to be considered effective.

In general, schools tend to depend heavily upon state assessments to measure progress toward meeting their achievement goals. The development of goals and benchmarks and the process of aligning them with these external standards is a time-consuming process. Many staff members at the sample schools indicated that the time and energy required to perform these tasks were the main barriers to the progress of their reform efforts.

All of the CSRD schools in the site-visit sample had established some level of program goals and benchmarks. Nearly 26 percent of the schools had goals and benchmarks in place prior to CSRD

funding and had not made any changes since then. Many of these schools had developed goals and benchmarks to meet state accountability requirements or as a result of participation in activities, such as prior school reform efforts or Title I schoolwide project planning. Staff at these schools believed that their existing goals were adequately comprehensive without further revision or refinement. Another 31 percent of schools visited reported having revised their existing goals and 44 percent reported adding new goals as a result of CSRD funding. No differences in the extent to which goals had been changed were evident across the school by grade level, geographic location, model type, Title I status, or strength of principal leadership.

When asked how they had changed their methods of assessing goal attainment since implementing comprehensive school reform, 23 percent of the schools indicated that no changes had occurred (see Exhibit 13). A majority of the schools, however, indicated using either multiple or more frequent assessments, improving the alignment of standards and assessments, or making better use of assessment data for planning and decisionmaking. In addition, nearly half of the schools reported developing and using rubrics.

Exhibit 13
Changes in the Method of Assessing Goal Attainment

How a school's method of assessing goal attainment has changed as a result of comprehensive school reform	Percent of schools
Used more frequent assessments	64%
Used multiple assessment methods	62%
Improved alignment of standards and assessments	59%
Made better use of assessment data for planning and decisionmaking	59%
Developed or used rubrics	46%
Added or revised benchmarks	28%
No change	23%
Other	3%

Note. N = 40.

Nearly all of the sample schools have aligned their goals with state and district standards. Of the schools visited, 78 percent reported having extensively aligned their goals with state standards, and 79 percent reported having extensively aligned their goals with district goals (see Exhibit 14). One state in the sample school region does not have state standards, but all of the schools visited in that state had aligned their goals with district standards. A little more than half (52%) of the schools reported having aligned their goals with other standards, such as those set by the National Councils of Teachers of Math and English (NCTM and NCTE, respectively). Many staff noted, however, that their goals were probably already consistent with those external standards.

Exhibit 14
Alignment of School Goals With State, District, or Other Standards

Standards with which school's goals and benchmarks are aligned	Percent of schools reporting		
	Extensive alignment	Some alignment	No alignment
State standards	78%	19%	3%
District standards	79%	16%	5%
Other standards (e.g., NCTM, NCTE)	26%	26%	48%

Note. $n = 37$.

The majority of the sample schools (77%) reported that the principal and school leadership team was primarily responsible for monitoring goal attainment (see Exhibit 15). About one-third of the schools reported that all staff members were responsible for monitoring goal attainment, and schools reported that model providers and district staff were also involved (28% and 41% of the schools, respectively). Other groups providing assistance monitoring goal attainment included state education agencies, assistant principals, curriculum and assessment coordinators, special curriculum teams, and outside evaluators.

Exhibit 15
Parties Responsible for Monitoring School Goal Attainment

Party responsible for monitoring goal attainment	Percent of schools^a
Principal and school leadership team	77%
District staff	41%
Each staff member	33%
Model provider	28%
Principal (without leadership team)	15%
State education agency	13%
Other	13%

^aPercentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were possible.

Note. *n* = 39.

The study team inquired about the proportion of teacher instruction that was linked to the goals and benchmarks of the school reform effort. As Exhibit 16 shows, 55 percent of the sample schools reported that the majority (75 to 100%) of instruction was linked to comprehensive school reform goals. As a result of spending time and effort developing new goals and reworking existing goals and benchmarks, many schools had a greater commitment to increasing student achievement and monitoring student progress. The practices of disaggregating test scores and using test results to revise instructional and curriculum priorities raised teachers' awareness of student achievement levels. Using alternative assessments of student progress and conducting assessment more frequently also resulted in increased overall student achievement.

Exhibit 16
Use of Goals and Benchmarks to Guide Instruction

The extent to which teachers involved with reform efforts have used goals and benchmarks to guide instruction	Percent of schools reporting
Most instruction (75% to 100%) linked to goals	55%
Considerable instruction (50% to 74%) linked to goals	16%
Some instruction (25% to 49%) linked to goals	24%
Little instruction (0% to 24%) linked to goals	5%

Note. *n* = 38.

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

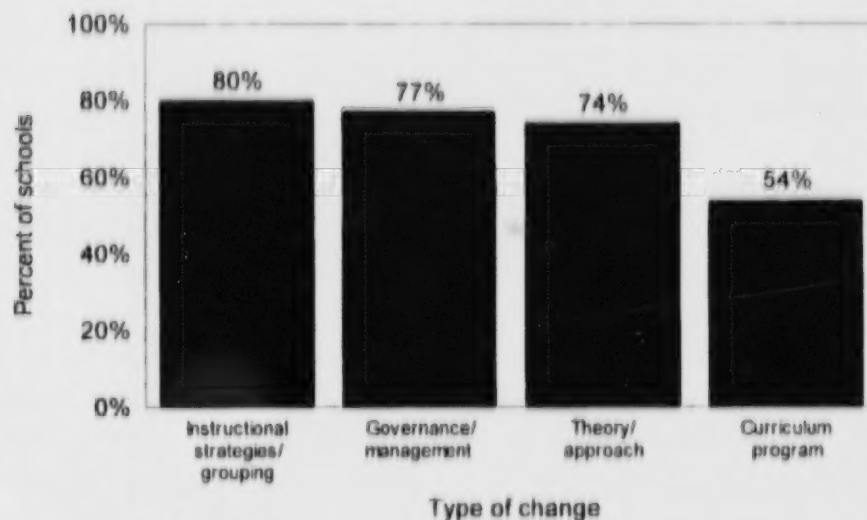
The U.S. Department of Education describes effective research-based school reform methods and strategies as “innovative and proven methods for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on reliable research and effective practices and have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics” (Application for State Grants Under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program, CFDA Number 84.332A). The 40 sample schools implemented a broad array of strategies in an effort to achieve positive school change. To better understand the nature of these changes, the study team asked each school whether they had made any of the following types of changes:

- Added a new curricular or instructional program (defined as a set of practices and procedures that include a specific set of instructional materials).
- Implemented new instructional strategies or grouping practices (instructional strategies defined as specific actions that promote learning, such as cooperative learning techniques, small group instruction, individualized computer instruction, use of mathematics manipulatives, and so on; grouping practices included multiage classrooms, special education inclusion, looping classes, etc.).
- Promoted the adoption of a particular learning theory or pedagogical approach (defined as a way of thinking about and organizing curriculum and instruction, such as integrated thematic instruction, project-based learning, or multiple intelligences).
- Made school governance or school management changes (including block scheduling, interdisciplinary teams, reform committees, greater teacher empowerment, etc.).

Exhibit 17 shows the percentage of sample schools that reported each type of change. Clearly, schools could make more than one type of change, and 80 percent of the schools implemented new instructional strategies or grouping practices, 74 percent promoted the adoption of a particular learning theory or pedagogical approach, 77 percent made school governance or school management changes, and 54 percent reported adding a new curricular or instructional program. Half of the schools made changes in three of the four areas, and one-quarter of the schools made changes in all four areas. No differences in the types of changes made were evident across the schools by grade level, geographic location, Title I status, or model type,

except that schools using governance models were more likely to report changes in school governance or management than schools using other types of models.

Exhibit 17
Effective Research-Based Strategies Used



Note: N = 40.

New Curricular or Instructional Programs

Slightly more than half (54%) of the sample schools added a new curricular or instructional program. Exhibit 18 shows that the majority of the curricular changes made (13) were in the area of reading or literacy and included the adoption of programs such as Accelerated Reader, 4 Blocks to Literacy, Reading Renaissance, and Success for All. Four of the curricular changes made were in the area of mathematics (either implementing Connected Math or Everyday Math), and 11 of the curricular changes made were in other areas, such as science, technology, or careers.

Exhibit 18
Types of Curricular Change

Curricular changes are:	Number of schools reporting change		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Reading or literacy	12		1
Mathematics	3	1	
Other	5	2	4

Note. $N = 40$.

New Instructional Strategies or Grouping Practices

Eighty percent of the sample schools implemented new instructional strategies or grouping practices as part of their school reform effort. Exhibit 19 shows the variety of new instructional strategies that schools implemented, including the use of cooperative learning techniques, mathematics manipulatives, critical thinking skills, rubrics, questioning strategies, and guided reading. The most frequently identified student grouping practices included flexible grouping strategies, multiage classrooms, and looping. Of the 28 schools that reported making changes in instructional strategies or grouping, 25 percent reported only one change and 75 percent reported making multiple changes.

Exhibit 19
Changes in Instructional Strategies or Grouping

Instruction strategy of grouping practice	Number of schools reporting		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Questioning strategies	2	1	
Critical thinking or higher-order thinking	3	1	1
Socratic seminars			1
Guided reading	1	1	
Schoolwide reading time			1
Writer workshop	1		
Mathematics manipulatives	3		
Integrated science		1	
Focus on state curriculum standards	2	1	1
Character education or life skills	1	2	1
Cooperative learning	3	1	
Flexible grouping	3		
Multiage classrooms	2		
Looping	1	2	
Graphic organizers	1		1
Student learning logs	1		1
Rubrics	1	1	1

Note. $n = 28$.

Adoption of a Particular Learning Theory or Pedagogical Approach

Seventy-five percent of the sample schools reported the adoption of a new learning theory or pedagogical approach. Many of these approaches are ways of thinking about or organizing curriculum and instruction, but they do not include specific instructional materials. Exhibit 20 shows that the most commonly identified pedagogical approaches were integrated thematic instruction, multidisciplinary instruction, or project-based learning. Other pedagogical approaches identified by schools included learning styles, multiple intelligences, constructivism, reading across the curriculum, and curriculum mapping.

Exhibit 20
Changes in Learning Theory or Pedagogical Approach

Pedagogical approach	Number of schools reporting		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Integrated thematic instruction	3	3	2
Project-based learning	5	1	2
Reading across the curriculum		3	2
Learning styles	1	2	
Multiple intelligences		2	1
Curriculum mapping	3		
Constructivism	2		

Note. N = 40.

School Governance or School Management Changes

Seventy-seven percent of the sample schools reported school governance or school management changes. Exhibit 21 shows that the most frequently identified school government of management changes included implementing block scheduling, establishing interdisciplinary planning teams, making schedule changes to allow for more teacher planning time, establishing school reform committees, and implementing site-based management. Many of these management and governance changes aimed to involve teachers in the comprehensive school reform process and reflect the changes schools made in their pedagogical approach to school reform. For example, a school adopting an integrated thematic instruction model needs time for teachers to meet so they can plan interdisciplinary thematic units. Likewise, the use of block scheduling may reflect the additional learning time necessary to implement a project-based curriculum.

Exhibit 21
School Governance or Management Changes

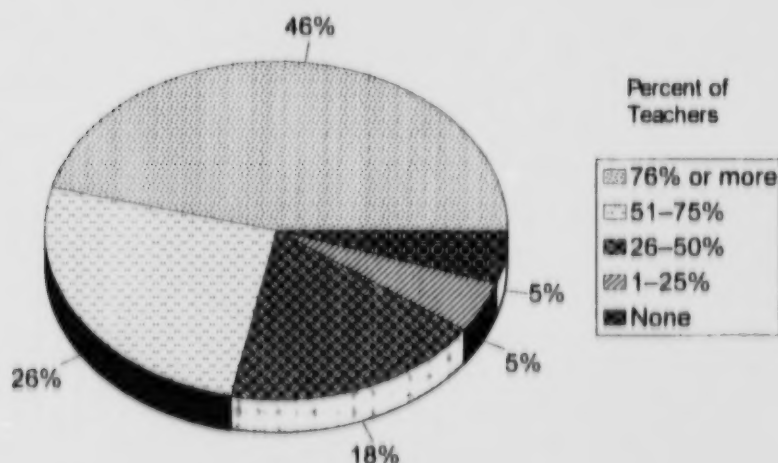
School governance or management change	Number of schools reporting		
	Elementary	Middle	High
Block scheduling	4	1	4
Interdisciplinary teams	1	2	3
Reform committees	3	1	
Schedule changes to increase teacher planning time	5		1
Site-based management	1		
Consensus model	4		

Note. $N = 40$.

Implementation of Classroom-Based Changes

The study team investigated the extent to which teachers implemented the changes the sample schools made as a result of comprehensive school reform. As Exhibit 22 shows, 46 percent of the sample schools reported that more than 75 percent of the teachers had implemented new curricular or instructional strategies in the classroom. Another 26 percent of the schools reported that between 51 percent and 75 percent of teachers had implemented new curricular or instructional strategies, and the remaining 28 percent of the schools reported that 50 percent or fewer teachers had implemented new curricular or instructional strategies. Those schools that reported no teacher implementation of new strategies indicated that the school reform process had not yet addressed classroom instruction. There were no differences in the percentage of teachers implementing new curriculum or instructional strategies across the three different model types.

Exhibit 22
Teacher Implementation of New Curriculum or Instructional Strategies



Note. N = 40.

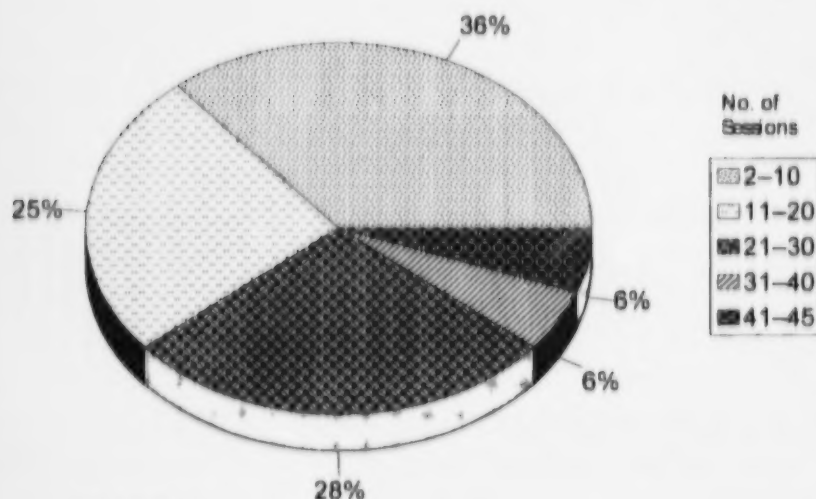
Professional Development

Data provided by 39 of the schools in the site-visit sample indicate that professional development activities ranged from many hours of comprehensive, model-focused training to a few hours of training on many unrelated topics. The study team used several strategies to collect information about professional development efforts related to comprehensive school reform. School staff completed a data-collection form by listing staff development dates, the duration of the training activities, the number of staff in attendance, the session topics, and the training providers. During site visits to the schools, the study team obtained information regarding professional development activities through structured and open-ended interview questions posed to principals and other staff members. The study team also obtained information through interviews with model consultants.

During the period from June 1998 to September 2000, the sample schools reported spending an average of 17 sessions and 170 hours on professional development activities. No differences were evident across the schools by grade level, geographic location, or model type for either the number of sessions offered or the number of hours spent on professional development.

Exhibit 23 shows the percentage of schools by number of professional development activities. Thirty-six percent of schools attended between two and 10 activities, 25 percent between 11 and 20 activities, and 28 percent between 21 and 30 activities. A small percentage of schools (11%) attended more than 30 professional development activities during the comprehensive school reform funding period.

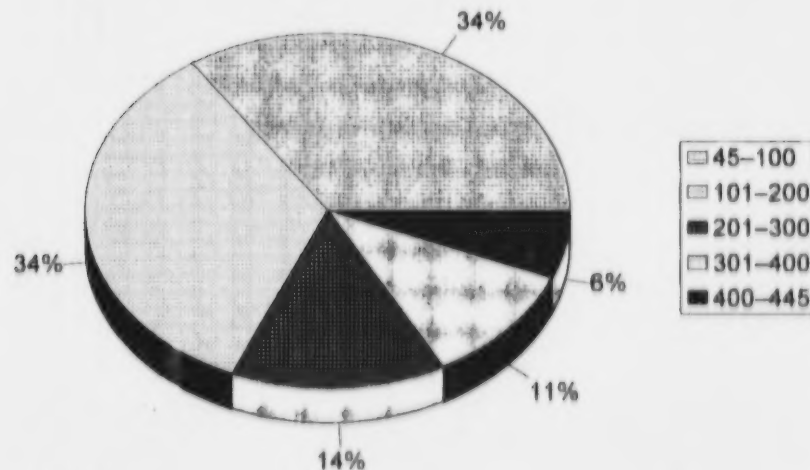
Exhibit 23
School Staff Participation in Professional Development



Note: n = 39.

Exhibit 24 depicts the total number of hours of professional development offered between June 1998 and September 2000. These hours reflect individual, subgroup, and total staff professional development activities. About 34 percent of the sample schools had between 45 and 100 hours of professional development activities available to staff, and another 34 percent had between 100 and 200 hours of professional development available. The remaining schools had between 201 and 445 hours of professional development activities available.

Exhibit 24
Hours School Staff Spent in Professional Development



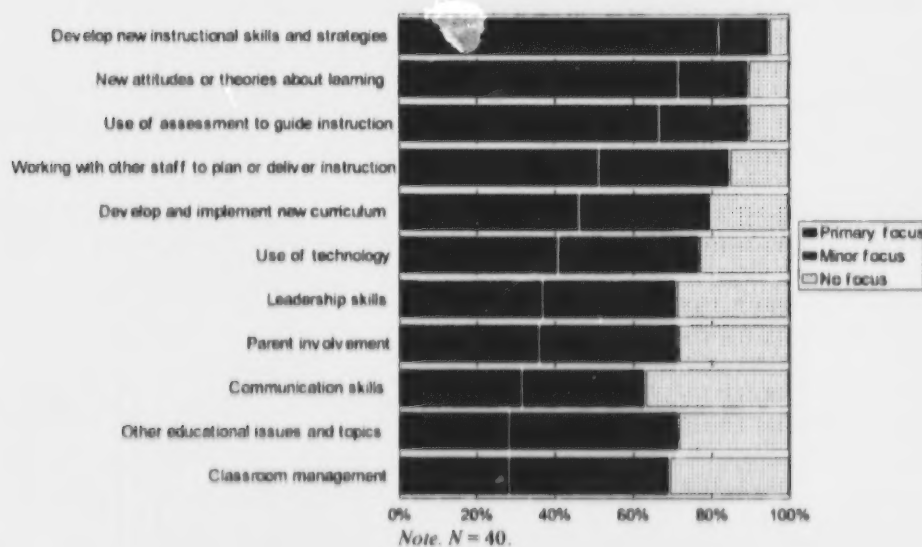
Note. N = 40.

Exhibit 25 portrays the emphasis the schools placed on various areas of professional development. Schools averaged 4.9 areas of major focus and 3.0 areas of minor focus. The majority (82%) of the sample schools indicated that developing new instructional skills and strategies was a primary focus of the professional development; only 13 percent of the schools indicated this area was a minor focus. In 72 percent of the schools, new attitudes or theories about learning was a primary focus of the professional development; in only 18 percent of the schools was this area a minor focus. Another area emphasized in professional development activities was the use of assessment to guide instruction (67% reported this area as a primary focus; 23% reported this area as a minor focus). The areas that received the least attention in professional development activities were communication skills, classroom management, and leadership skills.

Schools that placed primary focus on developing new instructional skills and strategies were also likely to use assessments to guide instruction. Schools that placed primary focus on working with

other staff to plan or deliver instruction also were likely to emphasize leadership and communication skills.

Exhibit 25
The Professional Development Areas Schools Focused On



Professional Development Topics

The study team used the lists of professional development activities that schools provided to compute the total number of professional development activities provided in seven general areas. Exhibit 26 lists the numbers of sessions devoted to these topics for the 36 sample schools that submitted data. Schools participated in an average of 17.2 professional development activities. The majority of professional development activities (42%) focused on topics related to curriculum and instruction, followed by in-depth training on the selected reform models (16% of the professional development activities). Across the sample schools, the fewest professional development activities were devoted to assessments and coaching school staff members (7% and 3% of the professional development activities, respectively).

Exhibit 26
Professional Development Topics

Professional development topic	Number of activities	Percent of activities	Number of Schools
Curriculum and instruction	262	42%	33
Model in-depth	101	16%	25
Governance and management	91	15%	23
Model overview	78	13%	21
Assessment	40	7%	16
Coaching	21	3%	8
Other	25	4%	12
Total	618	100%	

Note. $n = 36$. Data are from June 1998 through September 2000.

Looking at the number of professional development sessions devoted to each of the seven types of activities, one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) revealed that schools implementing a reform model focused on the overall school improvement process received a greater number of in-depth professional development sessions on the reform model itself ($M = 5.33$) than schools implementing curriculum-focused ($M = .89$) or principle-based models ($M = 2.90$), $F(2,271) = 5.18, p < .05$. Schools implementing principle-based reform models, however, received a greater number of professional development sessions focusing on assessments ($M = 1.76$) than schools implementing curriculum-based reform models ($M = .33$) or overall improvement-based models ($M = 0.00$), $F(2,96) = 4.86, p < .05$. No differences in the professional development topics were evident across the schools by grade level or geographic location.

Barriers to Effective Professional Development

The study team used data collected during the first two site visits to produce a list of potential barriers to effective professional development. Exhibit 27 lists these barriers and the percentages of schools indicating these barriers to be a problem. Insufficient time (62%) and a lack of access to substitute teachers (67%) were by far the most common barriers to effective professional development reported across the sample schools.

Exhibit 27
Barriers to Effective Professional Development

Barrier	Percent of principals reporting
Lack of access to substitute teachers	67%
Insufficient time for professional development	62%
Teacher contract issues (e.g., requirements of additional time or pay)	33%
Lack of follow-up support and training	31%
Lack of access to high-quality trainers	18%
Staff turnover	18%
Lack of an evaluation system for training and professional development	15%
Insufficient funds for professional development	13%
Content of professional development not matched to staff or student needs	13%
Lack of staff involvement in the selection of reform models and methods	10%
Lack of staff involvement in key decisions about professional development	8%
Other	20%

Note. $N = 40$.

Of the sample schools, 31 percent cited one of the barriers listed, 33 percent cited two or three of the barriers, 23 percent cited four or five of the listed barriers, and 13 percent cited between six and ten of the barriers. Subsequent analyses revealed that particular barriers more commonly affected some schools than others. These differences were evident across the sample schools by model type and grade level; no differences by geographic location were evident. Schools implementing a principle-based reform model were more likely than schools implementing curriculum-focused or school improvement process reform models to encounter problems accessing high-quality trainers, ² ($2, n = 39$) = 5.94, $p = .05$. In addition, elementary and middle schools were more likely than high schools to report having insufficient funds to provide effective professional development, ² ($2, n = 39$) = 9.01, $p = .01$. Elementary and middle schools also were more likely than high schools to report a lack of staff involvement in key decisions about professional development, ² ($2, n = 39$) = 6.66, $p < .05$.

Efforts to Reduce Barriers to Effective Professional Development

Some schools reported taking action to eliminate or reduce the barriers to effective professional development. During the study team's fall 2000 site visits, several principals reported that they had renegotiated teacher contracts or modified the terms of existing relationships with the reform model provider. For example, one principal increased the frequency of the consultant's site visits but decreased the duration of each visit. Several schools sought the assignment of different consultants to their schools due to dissatisfaction with the availability of their consultants. Other schools used their CSRD funds to hire and train full- or part-time on-site facilitators. Principals also reported: acquiring district funds to compensate school staff for excessive overtime hours; negotiating with the district for more time and funding for professional development activities devoted to reform; requiring all staff to serve on at least one reform committee; and providing additional external assistance to help staff learn about using assessment tools to guide instruction.

External Technical Assistance

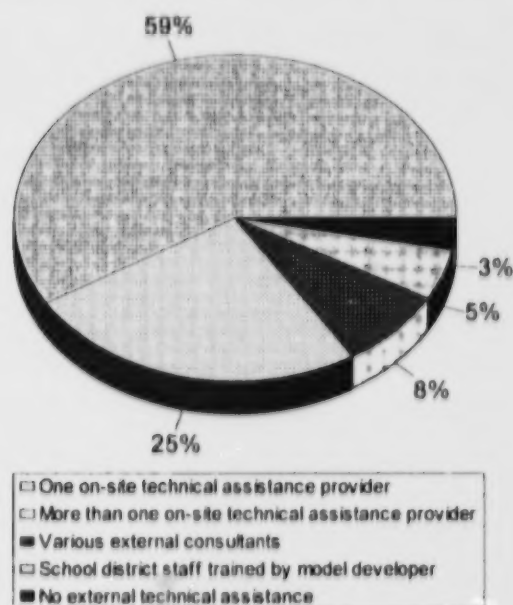
CSRD legislation recommends that funded schools receive technical assistance from an external source to assist in the implementation of comprehensive school reform. The number of days that the schools received on-site technical assistance from an external source (with the source usually being the reform model provider) varied greatly. The 31 sample schools that reported these data each received between 0 and 80 days of on-site assistance from their reform model provider; the median was 6 days. Ten of the 11 schools that reported receiving more than ten days of on-site technical assistance from their model provider were implementing principle-based reform models rather than curriculum-focused or school improvement process reform models.

Primary Sources of External Technical Assistance

The study team categorized each of the sample schools according to the primary source of technical assistance. Exhibit 28 shows that most (59%) of the 40 sample schools received the majority of the on-site technical assistance related to their reform approach from one provider. Another 25 percent of the schools received the majority of the technical assistance from more than one provider. The majority of the technical assistance that the remaining schools received was provided by various external consultants who addressed a range of reform model

components (8% of the schools) or by district staff trained by the model developer (5% of the schools). Three percent of the schools did not receive any such on-site technical assistance from an external source during the 1999–2000 school year.

Exhibit 28
Primary Sources of External Technical Assistance



Note. $N = 40$. Data period: 1999–2000

Differences in the primary source of external technical assistance across the sample schools were evident by geographic location and model type; no differences by grade level were evident. Analyses show that schools in rural areas and middle schools were slightly more likely to have received the majority of the technical assistance from one on-site provider rather than multiple providers, and schools implementing principle-based and school improvement process reform models tended to have received the majority of the technical assistance from one provider.

Overall, sample school staff indicated being satisfied with the primary technical assistance providers at their school. Seventy-one percent of the principals were mostly or completely satisfied with the technical assistance providers. However, 74 percent of the schools reported that

teachers on school leadership teams were mostly or completely satisfied with the technical assistance providers, but only 53 percent of the schools reported that teachers not on the school leadership teams were mostly or completely satisfied. Schools at which the model provider spent a significant amount of time on-site working individually with teachers and providing observation feedback tended to express satisfaction with the technical assistance providers. A principal of a rural school whose model provider spent a couple of weeks at a time on-site providing intensive training and technical assistance expressed strong satisfaction with the model provider. This principal reported that the model provider became familiar with the community and the teachers and worked hard to specifically address the school's needs.

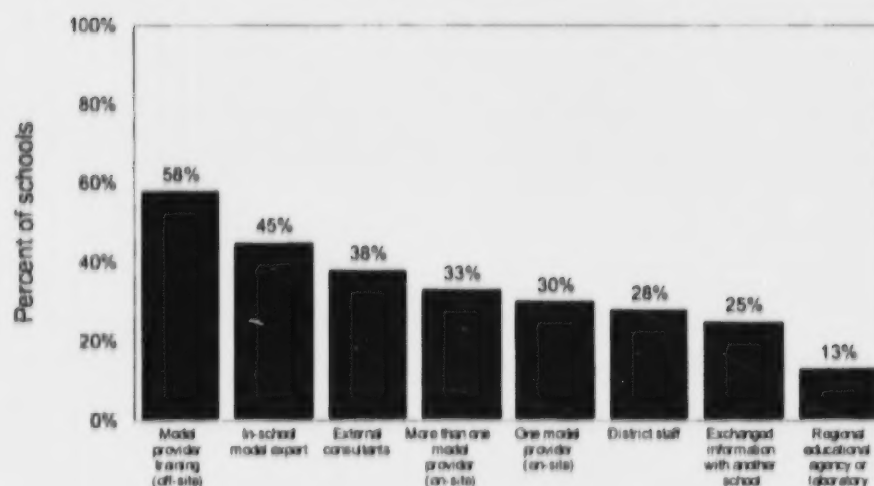
Some schools reported frustration and dissatisfaction with their technical assistance providers, because the provider tried to impose a structured model onto the school without addressing the school's individual needs; the model developer did not send the same trainer to the school each time, resulting in duplicated training and a lack of trust on the part of the school staff; or the model provider did not spend enough time on site. Schools dissatisfied with their reform model provider tried to remedy the situation prior to beginning the 2000–01 school year by requesting that the model developer assign a different trainer to the school or improve the consistency and focus of the technical assistance visits.

Additional Sources of External Technical Assistance

Most of the sample schools received additional external technical assistance to supplement the assistance provided by the primary technical assistance providers. Exhibit 29 shows that the majority (58%) of the schools participated in off-site training or a conference sponsored by the model developer. Nearly half (45%) of the schools contracted with the model developer to train one or more staff members to serve as an in-house model expert. Thirty-eight percent of the schools contracted with external consultants for assistance with specific aspects of comprehensive school reform. Typically, these consultants were university professors or college instructors with expertise in areas, such as peer coaching or multiage grouping. One-third (33%) of the schools received on-site technical assistance from more than one model provider representative. Some schools received technical assistance related to specific reform aspects

from district staff, regional education agencies or laboratories, or other schools implementing the same model.

Exhibit 29
Sources of Supplemental Technical Assistance



Note. *N* = 40. Data period: 1999–2000.

Disaggregating these data by geographic location, grade level, and model type revealed these findings:

- Four of the six rural elementary schools contracted with external consultants who were not associated with a model developer or district, and three exchanged information with another school that had adopted the same model.
- Staff from four of the six suburban elementary schools attended a training or conference sponsored by the model developer, and four of the suburban schools received from district staff technical assistance on specific areas of the selected reform model.
- Ten of the fifteen urban elementary schools sent staff to a training or conference sponsored by the model developer, and eight urban elementary schools received technical assistance from district staff.

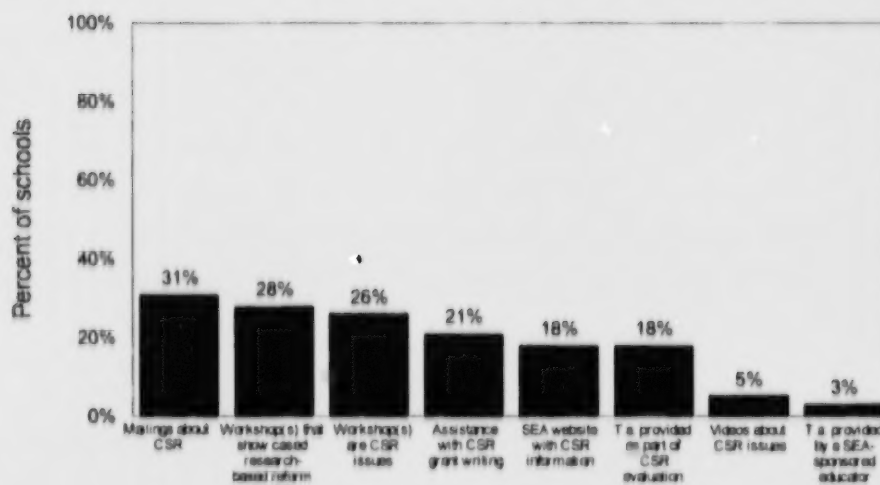
- All three of the urban middle schools sent staff to a training or conference sponsored by the model developer, and two urban middle schools received technical assistance from external consultants who were not associated with the district or model developer.
- The two rural high schools exchanged information with other schools implementing the same reform model.
- All seven of the schools implementing a school improvement process reform model and 12 of the 23 schools implementing a principle-based model reported sending staff to off-site training or conferences sponsored by the model developer.
- Thirteen of the twenty-three schools implementing a principle-based reform model contracted with their model provider to train an in-school model expert.
- Five of the nine schools implementing a curriculum-focused reform model contracted with external consultants to address specific areas of their selected reform model.

External Assistance from State Educational Agencies

One-third of the sample schools reported that their state education agency had provided technical assistance directly related to their selected reform model. A higher proportion of rural schools (5 out of 9) reported receiving technical assistance from their state education agency than did suburban schools (2 out of 9) or urban schools (6 out of 22). Proportionally, more high schools received technical assistance from their state education agency than did schools at lower levels: 4 out of 6 high schools received such assistance, compared to 7 out of 28 elementary schools and 2 out of 6 middle schools.

The sample schools received comprehensive school reform technical assistance from their state education agency while planning for reform or after receiving CSRD funding, as Exhibit 30 shows. Thirty-one percent of the schools reported accessing their state education agency's Web site to obtain or link to information about comprehensive school reform resources. Twenty-eight percent of the schools reported having attended state education agency workshops that showcased research-based reform models prior to selecting a reform model, and 26 percent reported attending workshops on comprehensive school reform issues, such as data-based needs assessment, program accountability, and planning for comprehensive school reform.

Exhibit 30 Technical Assistance Provided by State Education Agencies

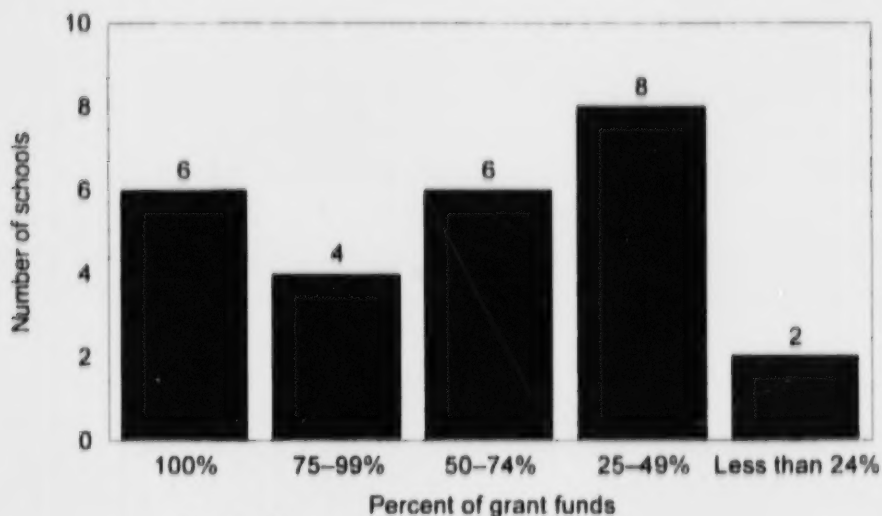


Note. N = 40.

Percentage of CSRD Grants Utilized for External Technical Assistance

Twenty-six of the sample schools reported the amount of their 1999–2000 CSRD grant funds that they spent on external technical assistance (including travel costs for technical assistance providers). This amount ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent; the average proportion was 60 percent. Exhibit 31 shows that six of the schools reported spending 100 percent of their CSRD grant on technical assistance, ten of the schools spent between 50 percent and 99 percent of their CSRD grant on technical assistance, and ten of the schools spent less than half of their CSRD grant on technical assistance.

Exhibit 31
CSRD Grant Funds Schools Utilized for External Technical Assistance



Note. n = 26.

Focus for the 2000-01 School Year

During the fall 2000 site visits, several sample schools—particularly those in the third year of their CSRD grant—expressed concern about securing funding to sustain their level of reform model implementation. These schools reported taking several measures to sustain their reform models, such as arranging for the training of school staff as in-house model experts, purchasing as many materials for their curriculum and instructional strategies as possible, organizing action teams or other systems of decentralized school governance to ensure staff involvement in decisionmaking, and training all staff on the selected reform model. Teachers reported needing continual professional development to maintain all of the new teaching strategies and expressed concern that with less professional development, they might experience difficulty maintaining the reform efforts. Also, many of the schools had high levels of staff turnover and staff at these schools expressed concern about how the school would provide new staff with all of the training needed to maintain momentum.

Parent and Community Involvement

The study team examined the role of parents and community members in planning and implementing comprehensive school reform efforts, general parent awareness of these reform efforts, and the activities schools conducted to increase parent and community involvement. The study team gathered data regarding the scope of the schools' previous efforts to involve parents and communities to serve as a basis of comparison. Parent focus groups and interviews were the primary sources of this information, although at some sites, no parents were available for interviews. In these cases, principals or other school staff provided information regarding parent and community involvement.

The study team discovered that increased parent involvement was a key goal in the comprehensive reform efforts of about three-quarters of the sample schools. Yet in over one-third of the schools, no parents had been involved in the planning process. In addition, 60 percent of the schools reported that no community members had been involved in the process. At some schools, parents formed committees, investigated possible reform models, served on school improvement teams, or served on the team that developed or oversaw the CSRD grant. Many schools and districts tried to involve parents and the community by holding public forums on the CSRD grant proposal or by conducting parent surveys.

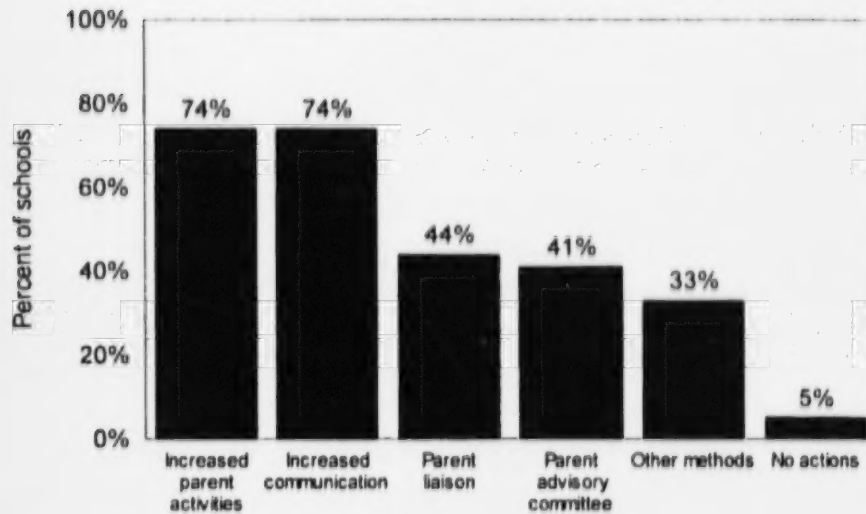
School administrators at each sample school were queried about the level of parent and community participation in the actual implementation of the reform efforts in terms of school leadership team membership and opportunities for input. Sixty-five percent of the schools reported that at least one parent served on the school leadership team, and 25 percent of the schools reported that community organization or business representatives served on the team. Eighty-two percent of the schools reported having utilized parent surveys, open meetings, and informal discussions to obtain input from parents regarding the implementation of comprehensive school reform. Almost half of the schools reported seeking input from the local community using similar methods. No significant differences in the number of parents involved in comprehensive school reform efforts were evident across the sample school by grade level, geographic location, or model type.

The study team asked school staff and parents about the level of awareness of reform efforts in the general parent population and the community at large. Awareness levels varied widely across the sample schools: 38 percent of the schools reported that 75 percent or more of the parents were aware of the reform efforts, yet 24 percent of the schools reported that less than one-fourth of their parents were aware of the reform efforts. Forty-two percent of the schools estimated that most community members were unaware of the reform efforts.

The sample schools also indicated whether they had a specific plan to increase parent involvement. Sixty-eight percent of the schools reported that they did, and almost half of the schools also reported that they had a plan to increase community involvement. In many cases, however, schools had not immediately begun to implement these plans or take specific steps to increase parent and community involvement. In the early stages of the grant period, some schools had focused on learning about the selected reform model, giving parent and community involvement initiatives less attention. By spring 2000, several schools reported having taken specific actions to increase parent and community involvement.

Exhibit 32 shows that to increase parent involvement, the sample schools most often chose to increase the number of parent activities (74%), send home additional information (74%), hire a parent liaison or home-school coordinator (44%), or form a parent advisory committee (41%). Elementary and high schools (86% and 67%, respectively) were also more likely than middle schools (33%) to promote parent involvement by increasing the number of parent activities, ² ($2, N = 40$) = 7.49, $p < .05$. Overall, elementary schools ($M = 2.96$) and high schools ($M = 2.50$) used a greater number of methods for increasing parent involvement than did middle schools ($M = 1.33$), $F(2,39) = 4.12$, $p < .05$. No significant differences in the actions taken to increase parent involvement were evident across the sample schools by geographic location.

Exhibit 32
Methods Used to Increase Parent Involvement



Note. $N = 40$.

Although the level of community awareness of and involvement in comprehensive school reform efforts was lower than that of the school parent population, some schools reported having taken specific actions to involve the community. Schools reported providing information to the local newspaper and seeking community partners to provide donations or volunteers in the classroom or at school events.

Coordination of Resources

Authority to manage their CSRD resources afforded many schools greater flexibility in program planning and implementation. The vast majority of the sample schools received Title I funds to help disadvantaged children meet high standards; these funds served as the other primary means of financing the comprehensive school reform efforts. Other funding sources included the Goals 2000 Program, Title II (for Eisenhower professional development), Title IV (for safe and drug-free schools), Title VI (for innovative educational programs), and 21st Century Learning Grants. In addition, schools reported using local curriculum and professional development funds, state

general aid or professional development funds, and block grants to support improvement activities.

Exhibit 33 shows the percentage of sample schools that received and used other funding in addition to their CSRD monies. Of the schools visited, 68 percent used Title I funds. The majority of these schools also operated a Title I schoolwide project which encourages the coordination of funding to help students meet high standards. Local and state funds also provided an important source of supplemental funding to help schools implement their comprehensive school reform programs.

Exhibit 33
Other Funding Sources for Comprehensive School Reform

Funding source	Percent of schools receiving funds	Percent of schools using funds for comprehensive school reform
Title I (Helping disadvantaged children meet high standards)	82%	68%
Title II (Eisenhower Professional Development Program)	63%	42%
Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools)	37%	13%
Title VI (Innovative Education Program Strategies)	37%	26%
Goals 2000	21%	16%
21 st Century Learning Grants	24%	13%
Local funds	63%	45%
State funds	47%	34%
Other funds	32%	24%

Note. N = 40.

Coordination of resources allows schools to maximize the impact of their CSRD efforts by directing as many funds as possible toward those efforts. Many schools have recognized that this coordination is especially critical because the CSRD funds will be phased out and the schools will need to rely on other funding sources to sustain and maintain their initial reform efforts.

Because of the comprehensive scope of most of the selected reform plans, the sample schools often used multiple funding sources to finance teacher release time, professional development, materials, external technical assistance, and other expenses. One of the advantages of establishing a coherent and comprehensive school improvement plan was the school's ability to quickly compare needs with resources and identify the most effective uses of those resources. For example, one school was able to respond promptly to a grant application request because its improvement plan included a prioritized list of additional assistance (e.g., technology, materials, professional development) that would further the implementation of their plan. Principals were also positive about their abilities to coordinate resources and indicated that resource coordination had enhanced the implementation of their selected comprehensive school reform models.

Evaluation Strategies

Most of the sample schools began developing and implementing strategies to evaluate their comprehensive school reform efforts after receiving CSRD funding. The schools' evaluation strategies ranged from annually describing their reform model implementation efforts in a report to comprehensively evaluating reform model implementation and student assessment data utilization.

Strategies to Evaluate Comprehensive School Reform Implementation

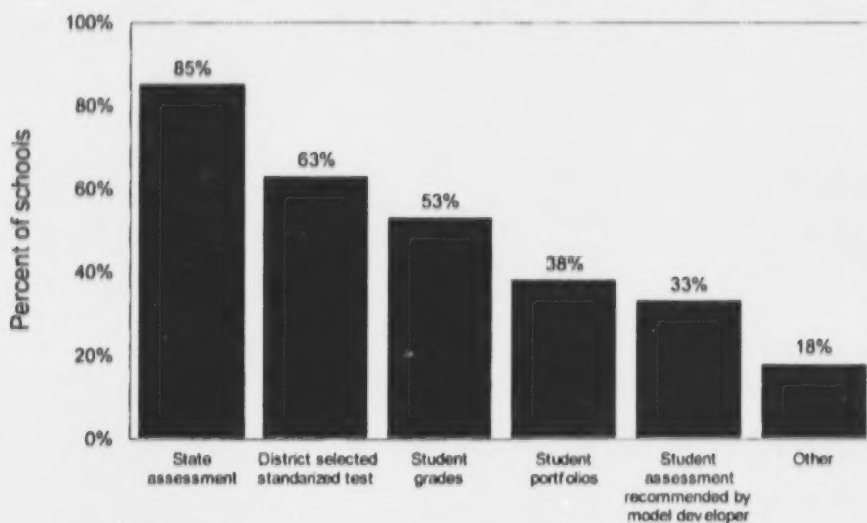
The 40 sample schools mostly used informal methods to evaluate their efforts to implement new curriculum or instructional strategies. The most common evaluation method employed by the schools was obtaining teacher input. All of the schools had developed an implementation timeline and goals as part of their comprehensive school reform plan, and most schools used these timelines to describe their progress implementing the selected reform models in required, annual year-end reports to their state education agency or district. Many schools also analyzed student grades and test scores, and several schools surveyed teachers, parents, and students. Four schools relied on the reform model provider for feedback on program implementation; three schools relied on their school improvement team for such feedback. At least five schools reported that they had not evaluated their efforts to implement new curriculum or instructional strategies.

The sample schools evaluated the implementation of new school governance or management strategies in much the same manner. Obtaining teacher input was again the most common evaluation method. The responsibility for evaluating the implementation of new governance strategies or management strategies fell to the school improvement team at five schools and an outside evaluator at another; one school reported that an external audit conducted by the district had yielded evaluative feedback. Seven schools did not evaluate the implementation of new school governance or management strategies.

Strategies to Evaluate Student Learning

The 40 sample schools reported relying on a variety of measures to evaluate student learning. Exhibit 34 shows that in 1999–2000, 85 percent of the schools used state assessment results, 63 percent used district-selected standardized test results, 53 percent used student grades, 38 percent used student portfolios, and 33 percent employed student assessments recommended by their model developer. Furthermore, the majority of the schools (80%) reported using multiple measures to assess student learning: 10 percent of the schools used two measures, 40 percent used three of the measures, 15 percent used four measures, and 15 percent used five or six measures.

Exhibit 34
Data Schools Utilized to Evaluate Student Learning



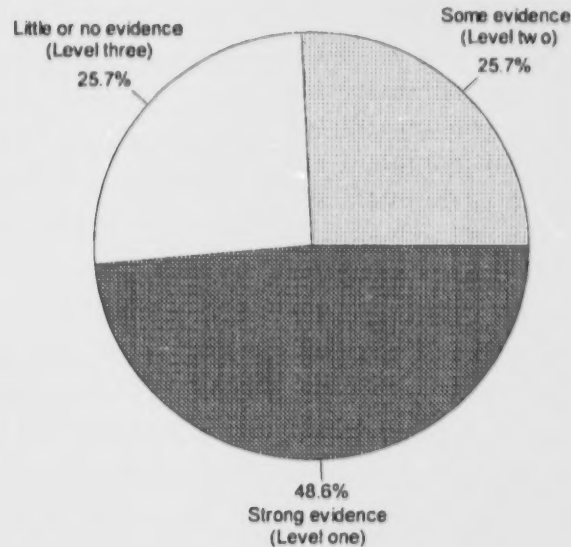
Utilizing Student Assessment Data to Modify School Reform Efforts

During the course of this study nearly all of the sample schools showed some change in how they used student assessment data to reflect on or modify their comprehensive school reform efforts. Some of the schools gained the awareness that they needed to begin critically examining student assessment data. Whereas some schools slowly, perhaps reluctantly, developed strategies to utilize student assessment data, other schools developed plans and began collecting baseline data as soon as they received their CSRD grants. The few schools that had strong evaluation strategies in place prior to the study continued to refine how they utilized their student assessment data to inform decisionmaking regarding school reform efforts.

The study team categorized the sample schools into three groups according to the extent to which the schools utilized student assessment data to modify school reform efforts (see Exhibit 35). The study team based these categorizations on information obtained from a variety of sources during the three site visits to each school. The three levels of school assessment data utilization are:

- Level 1—Little or no evidence that student assessment data had been used for program improvement. Staff at some Level 1 schools showed little interest in using student assessment data to systematically assess student performance, whereas other schools that reported feeling unknowledgeable about how to use data for decisionmaking showed interest in learning. Some Level 1 schools also reported not yet implementing their plans to use student assessment data.
- Level 2—Some evidence that student assessment data had been used for program improvement. Level 2 schools had developed strategies to utilize student assessment data and were generally in the process of collecting baseline data. In some cases school staff were attempting to utilize student assessment data on their own; in other cases the school was utilizing some student assessment data but had not adopted a comprehensive system for reviewing and interpreting the data.
- Level 3—Strong evidence that student assessment data had been used for program improvement. Level 3 schools utilized several strategies to collect and review student assessment data and involved all staff in using the data for discussing, planning, and modifying their comprehensive school reform efforts.

Exhibit 35
Percent of Schools That Utilized Student Assessment Data



Note. n = 35.

Schools That Exhibited Strong Evidence of Utilizing Student Assessment Data

The study team disaggregated the student assessment utilization data across the sample schools by geographic location, grade level, model type, and strength of principal leadership. Analyses revealed the following patterns among the three levels of school assessment data utilization:

- A higher proportion of rural schools (6 out of 9) exhibited strong evidence that they had utilized student assessment data to modify reform efforts than suburban schools (3 out of 7) and urban (8 out of 20) schools. Urban high schools were fairly evenly distributed at each level of student assessment data utilization.
- Little or no evidence indicated that middle and high schools had utilized student assessment data for program improvement (1 out of 5 middle schools and 1 out of 5 high schools), but the majority of elementary schools exhibited strong evidence of utilizing student assessment data (15 out of 26 schools).

- Half of the schools implementing a principle-based reform model (11 out of 21 schools) exhibited strong evidence of utilizing student assessment data for program improvement compared to 4 out of 9 schools implementing a curriculum-focused model and 2 out of 6 schools implementing a school improvement process reform model.
- The majority of schools whose principals received a strong leadership rating (13 out of 18 schools) exhibited strong evidence of utilizing student assessment data for program improvement. In contrast, most of the schools whose principals' leadership skills received a rating of average or poor exhibited little or no evidence of utilizing student assessment data for program improvement (5 out of 9 schools and 3 out of 4 schools, respectively).

External CSRD Evaluations

Many of the sample schools reported that they had participated in several evaluations and research studies because of their CSRD grant. In addition to the NCREL study, these studies included evaluation site visits or surveys from state education agency staff (53%), the model developer (45%), or a CSRD telephone survey contracted by the U.S. Department of Education (35%). Ten percent of the schools' CSRD efforts were evaluated by their districts.

Summary and Issues for Further Study

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program was established in 1998 to provide financial assistance to underachieving schools to assist them in implementing research-based strategies that show promise for improving student achievement. The present study examines the implementation of CSRD in a sample of schools in the region served by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL). NCREL staff drew from each state a roughly proportionate sample of schools to be involved in a series of three site visits aimed at describing the comprehensive school reform implementation process. The sample represented both the range of grade levels involved (elementary, middle, and high schools) and geographic locale (urban, suburban, and rural). The study focused on the nine components of school reform described in the CSRD legislation, the factors facilitating and inhibiting implementation, and the types of assistance schools received from external technical assistance providers.

This report summarizes the findings from three rounds of site visits to 40 schools conducted in January and February 2000, April and May 2000, and September and October 2000. The site visitors conducted the following data-collection activities at each site:

- Interview with the school principal
- Focus group or individual interviews with members of the CSR leadership team
- Focus groups or individual interviews with a sample of teachers
- Observations of classrooms in which teachers were implementing new practices
- Focus group or individual interviews with parents
- Telephone or in-person interview with district staff involved with CSR
- Telephone or in-person interview with the external technical assistance providers

Each set of focus group or interview questions revolved around the implementation of the nine components of comprehensive school reform. In addition, site visitors collected copies of CSRD grant applications, school improvement plans, demographic data, documentation of professional development activities, and other background information from each school.

The major findings include:

- Most schools in this study served high-poverty, highly mobile populations with large concentrations of non-Caucasian students. The sample included 28 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, and 6 high schools. The 40 schools included 22 urban, 9 suburban, and 9 rural schools. A breakout of schools by Title I status revealed that 23 operated Title I schoolwide programs, seven had Title I targeted assistance programs, and ten did not have Title I programs. School sizes ranged from 40 to 1,375 students. Almost three-fourths of the principals had fewer than five years of experience in the school.
- The 40 schools selected 26 different school reform models, most of which could be characterized as principle-based models that combined school change process features with specific instructional practices. The study team classified four of these models as locally developed, meaning that the school's approach to reform was not guided by a specific reform model but rather involved a selection of changes in school management, teaching strategies, or curriculum.
- School staff generally supported comprehensive school reform efforts as a result of involvement in reform model selection, training on the reform models, involvement on reform committees, or principal support and encouragement for the reform effort.
- Nearly all of the schools in the site-visit sample had identified program goals and established benchmarks for measuring progress toward those goals. Involvement in CSRD caused many schools to reexamine or revise their existing goals and benchmarks to make them more rigorous or measurable, and caused over half of the schools to use more frequent assessments as well as more assessment methods. Schools generally relied upon annual state or district assessments to measure progress toward meeting achievement goals.
- Eighty percent of the sample schools reported making changes in instructional strategies or grouping practices; 77 percent made governance or management changes; 74 percent made changes based on a learning theory or approach to instruction; and 54 percent made curricular changes.

- The most common professional development activities were designed to develop new instructional skills and strategies, to teach new attitudes or theories about learning, to use assessment to guide instruction, to help staff work together to plan or deliver instruction, and to develop and implement new curriculum.
- Schools cited a variety of obstacles to professional development, including lack of access to substitute teachers, insufficient time, teacher contract issues involving extra time or pay, and lack of follow-up support and training.
- The majority of the schools received most of their technical assistance from one external provider. Most schools were satisfied with the services they had received from their external technical assistance providers. Problems with model providers included not enough contact, assistance too general or canned, changes in model providers, or insufficiently trained providers. Schools received CSR information from their SEAs via mailings, workshops on research-based reform models, workshops on CSR issues, and the SEA Web site.
- Increased parent involvement was a key goal in the reform efforts of three-fourths of the sample schools. Although parents were included on the leadership teams at 65 percent of the schools, overall parent awareness of reform efforts was low. Sample schools tried to increase parent involvement through offering an increased number of parent activities at the school, increasing the amount of communication from the school to the home, hiring a parent liaison, or forming a parent advisory committee.
- Most schools were able to coordinate resources from different funding sources to support reform efforts. Common sources of support included Title I; Goals 2000; 21st Century Learning Centers; and district, state, or federal professional development funds.
- Most schools used informal methods, such as staff meetings, to evaluate the implementation of new curriculum or instructional strategies. Over 85 percent of the schools used state assessments to evaluate student learning; 63 percent used district-standardized tests; and 53 percent used student grades. About half of the schools consistently used evaluation data for program decisionmaking; one-quarter was beginning to use data; and the other quarter had not yet implemented any strategies.

Conclusion

The 40 schools in this sample engaged in reform that was truly comprehensive, covering most, if not all, of the nine elements of reform outlined in the CSR legislation. However, it is important to note that the schools' comprehensive reform approaches varied substantially in the nine elements they covered and how they covered them.

Schools selected a broad range of models and approaches that were characterized by the evaluation team as curriculum-based, principle-based, or focused on the reform process. Most of these schools established satisfactory relationships with external technical assistance providers. For the most part, schools did not differ in their approaches to reform across grade levels or geographic locale.

Comprehensive school reform efforts resulted in a number of successes for this group of schools. Most schools were able to:

- Engage in an increased number of professional development activities
- Become more aware of effective, research-based teaching practices
- Become more focused on goals and standards
- Increase the number and types of assessments they used to measure progress toward goals
- Begin to evaluate not only the outcomes for students but the implementation of new strategies

However, achievement of these successes was not without challenges. High principal and teacher turnover in some schools made it difficult to maintain the momentum of reform and keep all staff trained in the new strategies. In some schools, changes in external assistance providers slowed progress as well. Finding the time for professional development activities and finding substitutes for teachers so that they could participate during their regular workday was problematic for many schools. Obtaining parent involvement in the reform process as well as other school activities continued to present difficulties. Most schools had little time or expertise to evaluate the implementation of their reform strategies or to link implementation to student outcome data.

Finally, many schools had serious concerns about the sustainability of their reform efforts once CSRD funding ended. These challenges are not unique to the early stages of implementing comprehensive school reform but are ones faced by many, if not most, schools engaged in whole school reform.

Overall, CSRD funding presented an important opportunity for schools to initiate comprehensive reform. Most of the schools in the sample were in their first year of implementation during the 1999-2000 school year and showed signs of making progress toward their goals. This study attempted to describe the process of reform implementation and found a range of successes even among schools implementing the same model.

Further study is needed to determine whether and how these schools can sustain their reform momentum over a longer period of time. The diversity of their approaches argues that in-depth descriptive studies, such as this one, will remain important for understanding and explaining school's implementation of comprehensive school reform, their successes and challenges, and the assistance they receive from their districts and model providers. Furthermore, such research will become more important as schools and other comprehensive school reform stakeholders focus increasing attention on the impact of comprehensive school reform on students' learning.

Appendix A
Data Collection Instruments for First Site Visit

Contents

Principal Interview Winter 2000	1
Teacher Focus Group Winter 2000	7
District Staff Interview Winter 2000.....	12
Model Provider Telephone Interview Winter 2000	17
Parent Focus Group Winter 2000.....	22
Classroom Observation Protocol.....	26
Criteria for Classroom Selection.....	28
Summary of CSRD Staff Deveiopment	29

Principal Interview Winter 2000

Introduction

Facilitator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of your visit to the school by saying, "My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other researchers in the NCREL seven-state region under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research into the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. I want to stress again that this is *not* an evaluation. As we noted in the information we sent to you earlier, the focus of this study is on understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of school reform. We have a set of questions for you, for teaching staff, for district office staff who may be involved in CSRD, for parents, and for the model providers who are assisting you with implementation."

Comments made by individuals will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential. Schools will not be identified in research reports. Copies of the reports will be distributed to participating schools. (Optional) "I would like to tape-record the session to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased." The specific topics I would like to discuss are:

- Your school's comprehensive school reform approach¹ as described in its proposal, and the degree to which it has been implemented.
- How the school's comprehensive reform *model(s)*² fits into the reform approach.
- How the reform approach and the model are aligned with other school activities and programs
- Coordination of the comprehensive school reform resources with other resources
- Support within the school for the comprehensive school reform process
- Professional development and outside technical support
- Measurable goals and benchmarks
- Student assessment and program evaluation
- Parent and community involvement

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Principal Name: _____ Date: _____

¹ The CSR *approach* is the school's plan for implementing the nine elements of comprehensive school reform identified in the legislation.

² The CSR *models* are programs the school is adopting to address some or all of the nine elements (e.g., High Schools That Work, Success for All, Accelerated Schools, etc.). A school may adopt multiple models as part of its approach to reform.

No. years at this school: _____ No. years previous principal experience: _____

No. years teaching experience: _____ No. years working in this district: _____

A. School Context

I would like to know a little about your school. What long-term challenges have you faced? What has been done to meet those challenges?

- Background of school changes, school funding, local issues
- School strengths and challenges
- Categorical programs such as Title I, bilingual, migrant, Goals 2000
- District and state reform initiatives, school participation, and impact

B. Planning for Comprehensive School Reform

- Which staff members were involved in planning and writing your CSRD proposal?
- What processes did you use to decide which reform model to adopt?
- Which reform models were considered?
- When did you receive funding for your CSRD proposal?

C. CSRD Approach and Model Implementation Status

Let's discuss the comprehensive school reform approach and model(s) you are using at the school.

- Have you modified the school's comprehensive school reform approach from how it was described in the school's proposal, or are you following it closely?
- What proportion of the school's staff are involved in implementing your comprehensive school reform approach?
- According to your proposal, you are using (model[s]) _____ in your comprehensive school reform approach.
- Have you modified the model, or are you following it closely?
- If using more than one model, how are you integrating the models?
- How would you describe the relationship between the model(s) and the school's comprehensive school reform approach? (e.g., they are one and the same; the model(s) is the heart of the approach; the model(s) is one of the most important components of the approach)

Please describe your timeline for implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model, and where you are in that process.

- What implementation plans do you have for the 1999–2000 school year?
- Where do you expect to be by the end of the 1999–2000 school year?
- What implementation plans do you have for the 2000–01 school year?

What challenges or barriers have you faced in implementing the nine elements of your comprehensive school reform approach and the model(s) you have adopted? How are you addressing these barriers?

I. Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components

How well are your reform approach and model aligned with state standards? District standards? The school's curricular programs?

- What curricular programs are you currently using at the school?
- How well do these programs align with your comprehensive school reform approach and model?
- If a Title I school, has your school been identified as in need of school improvement? If so, how does the comprehensive school reform approach and model fit into your improvement plan?
- If a Title I schoolwide project, how does the comprehensive school reform approach and model fit into your schoolwide plan?

II. Support Within the School

How supportive are teachers and other school staff of the reform approach and model you are using?

- What has been done at the school to create support for the new reform approach and model?
- What evidence do you have that staff supports the reform efforts?
- Compared to the start of implementation, would you say that the staff is more or less supportive of the approach and model now? Why?
- What additional activities might be needed to ensure further support for the model?

III. Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

Has the school established *new* goals for student achievement as part of the comprehensive school reform implementation process?

If yes, what goals have you established for student achievement? Do you have benchmarks for measuring progress toward attainment of those goals? (obtain documentation if possible)

- How were these goals and benchmarks established?
- Was this, at least in part, in response to district or state standards?

IV. Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

Could you briefly describe the new research based methods and strategies in your comprehensive school reform approach that the school staff is implementing?

- In what ways is the curriculum content now taught different from what was taught before the model was adopted?
- In what ways are the instructional strategies different?
- Has assessment (school and classroom levels) of student progress changed in any way?
- What changes have taken place in school governance or management?

V. Professional Development

What professional development have teachers received to help implement your reform model? (see "Summary of CSRD Staff Development" form)

- Is there a long-term strategy for professional development in the school's comprehensive school reform initiative? If so, please describe it. (Probe for "formal" sessions as well as "informal" sessions, such as observing each other's classes, coaching, etc.)
- How many formal, scheduled professional development sessions have teachers been offered as part of the school's comprehensive school reform initiative? Who has provided them? Have there been sessions for you and other school administrators, too? (Enter on Staff Development form).
- How useful has this professional development been in implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model?
- To what extent have these activities changed what your staff teaches or how it teaches? What do you and other school administrators do?
- What additional professional development is being planned or, in your opinion, is needed?

VI. External Technical Support and Assistance

What kinds of external support or technical assistance have been provided to the school to help implement your comprehensive school reform?

- How much and what kind of support for implementing your school's comprehensive school reform approach and model has been received from the model provider? (Please give specific examples of support you have received in addition to the staff development listed above).
- From the district?
- From other providers such as the SEA or other consultants?
- How effective has this support been?
- What additional support is planned for the 1999–2000 year?
- What support is planned for the 2000–01 year?

VII. Parental and Community Involvement

How supportive are parents and community members of your school's comprehensive school reform initiative?

- What proportion of parents would you say know about the school's comprehensive school reform initiative? What proportion of community members?
- What efforts have been made to enlist greater parent or community support for the initiative?
- How successful have these efforts been?
- What activities or programs are available to involve parents and community members in the school's comprehensive school reform activities?
- What additional efforts to inform and involve parents and the community in your reform activities are planned for the 1999–2000 school year?

VIII. Coordination of Resources

How does the school coordinate and combine resources (e.g., money and time) to integrate the comprehensive school reform approach with other school programs?

- What other financial resources are available to support the school's reform and improvement efforts? (federal, state, local, private)
- How does the school coordinate these financial resources? (e.g., using comprehensive school reform money and Goals 2000 money for professional development or for creating a pool of money for substitute teachers so that teachers can plan together or coach each other.)

- What other "time" resources are available to support the school's reform and improvement efforts?
- How does the school coordinate these resources (e.g., the Title I coordinator also plays a major role in implementing the school's comprehensive school reform initiative.)?

IX. Evaluation Strategies

To what extent does the school use data to drive planning and decisionmaking in the implementation of comprehensive school reform?

- How was data (such as needs assessment data) used to identify a reform model or to plan an approach to comprehensive school reform?
- What strategies are you using to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the current reform approach and model at the school?
- How are you assessing the impact of the school reform approach and model on student outcomes?
- How are the school's and the district's evaluation of comprehensive school reform connected? The school's and model provider's evaluations? The school's and the state's evaluations?

Overall

Please provide examples of how the changes in planning, curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment, or parent involvement have improved learning opportunities for students?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank the principal for his or her time and helpful information.

Teacher Focus Group Winter 2000

Introduction

Facilitator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of your visit to the school by saying, "My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other researchers in the NCREL seven-state region under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research into the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. The focus of this study is on understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of school reform. It is *not* an evaluation of your school's reform efforts. We have a set of questions for teaching staff, for the principal, for district office staff who may be involved in CSRD, for parents, and for the model providers who are assisting you with implementation."¹

"Comments made by individuals will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential. Schools will not be identified in the research reports. Copies of the reports will be distributed to participating schools."

(Optional) "I would like to tape-record the session to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased."

¹ Note to facilitator: The *CSR approach* is the school's plan for implementing the nine elements of comprehensive school reform identified in the legislation. The *CSR models* are programs the school is adopting to address some or all of the nine elements (e.g., High Schools That Work, Success for All, Accelerated Schools, etc.). A school may adopt multiple models as part of its approach to reform.

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Focus Group Participants: Date: _____

Teacher Name	Grade/Subjects Taught	Yrs. Teaching Experience	Yrs. At This School

A. School Context

I would like to know a little about your school. What are the major challenges faced by teachers in this school? What is being done to meet those challenges?

B. Planning for Comprehensive School Reform

- How were teachers involved in planning the school reform approach and selecting the model(s) to be implemented?
- When did the majority of school staff first receive training in the model?

C. Model Implementation Status

Let's discuss the reform approach and model(s) you are using at the school.

- According to your proposal, you are using (model).
- What proportion of the staff are involved in the implementation?
- How have the reform approach and model changed what you do in the classroom?

What challenges or barriers have you faced in implementing the model? How are you addressing these barriers?

I. Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components

How well do the current curricular programs align with your reform model?

II. Support Within the School

How supportive are teachers and other school staff of the reform model you are using?

- What has been done at the school to create support for the new reform model?
- What evidence do you have that staff supports the reform efforts?
- How supportive of the reform process and models is the principal?
- What additional activities might be needed to ensure further support for the model?

III. Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

Have you established goals for student achievement as a result of the comprehensive school reform process? Do you have benchmarks for measuring attainment of those goals?

- How were these goals and benchmarks established?
- Was this in response to district or state standards?
- Have the goals been modified since implementing the program?

IV. Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

Could you briefly describe the specific changes you have made as a result of implementing your reform model(s)?

- In what ways is the curriculum content now taught different from what was taught before the model was adopted?
- In what ways are the instructional strategies different?
- Has assessment of student progress changed in any way?
- What changes have taken place in school governance or management?

V. Professional Development

[Review responses provided by principal in "Summary of CSRD Staff Development" form]

- How useful has this professional development been in implementing the model?
- To what extent have these activities changed what or how you teach?
- What additional professional development is do you feel is needed?

VI. External Technical Support and Assistance

What kind of external support or technical assistance has been provided to the teachers to help implement your reform model?

- How much and what kind of support has been received from the model provider? (Please give specific examples of support you have received)
- From other providers such as the district, SEA, or other consultants?
- How effective has this support been?

VII. Parental and Community Involvement

How supportive are parents and community members for the school program and your new reform model?

- What proportion of parents would you say know about the school's comprehensive school reform initiative? What proportion of community members?
- What activities or programs are available to involve parents and community members in the school's comprehensive school reform activities?

VIII. Coordination of Resources

[Skip for teachers]

IX. Evaluation Strategies

To what extent do you use student achievement data for decisionmaking in your classroom?

- How are you assessing the impact of the school reform model on students?
- What formal or informal assessments do you use to assess student learning?
- What reports do you receive about student progress?
- How do you use this information?

- How does use of data differ now compared to before implementation of your comprehensive school reform approach?

Overall

Please provide examples of how the changes in planning, curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment, or parent involvement have improved learning opportunities for students?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank the teachers for their time and helpful information.

District Staff Interview Winter 2000

Introduction

Facilitator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of your visit to the school by saying, "My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other researchers in the NCREL seven-state region under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research into the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. I want to stress that this is *not* an evaluation. The focus of this study is on understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of school reform. We have a set of questions for you, the school principal, teaching staff, parents, and for the model providers who are assisting the school with implementation."

"Comments made by individuals will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential. Schools and districts will not be identified in the research reports. Copies of the reports will be distributed to participating schools."

(Optional) "I would like to tape-record the session to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased."

The specific topics I would like to discuss are:

- How the reform approach⁴ and the *model(s)*⁵ are aligned with other district activities and programs
- Coordination of the comprehensive school reform resources with other resources
- Support from the district for the comprehensive school reform process
- Professional development and outside technical support
- Measurable goals and benchmarks
- Student assessment and program evaluation
- Parent and community involvement

⁴ The CSR *approach* is the school's plan for implementing the nine elements of comprehensive school reform identified in the legislation.

⁵ The CSR *models* are programs the school is adopting to address some or all of the nine elements (e.g., High Schools That Work, Success for All, Accelerated Schools, etc.). A school may adopt multiple models as part of its approach to reform.

School Name: _____ Location: _____

District Staff Name(s)/Positions: _____

No. years working in this district: _____ Date: _____

A. School Context

I would like to know a little about your district. What long-term challenges have you faced? What has been done to meet those challenges?

- Background of district changes, school funding, local issues
- What are the district's strengths and challenges?
- School strengths and challenges
- How is the school similar to and different from other (elementary/middle/high) schools in the district?

B. Planning for Comprehensive School Reform

- Which district staff was involved in planning and writing the CSRD proposal?
- Was district staff involved in deciding which reform model to adopt?
- Which reform models were considered?
- Has any district staff received professional development or training in the model(s) being used?

C. Model Implementation Status

Please describe the school's progress to date in implementing its comprehensive school reform initiative.

Please explain the district role in implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model.

- What involvement have you had during the current (1999–2000) school year?
- What involvement plans do you have for the 2000–01 school year?

What challenges or barriers has the school faced in implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model? How are you helping to address these barriers? What challenges has the district faced in helping them?

I. Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components

How well is the school's reform approach and model aligned with state standards? District standards? The district's other reform initiatives?

What has the district done to help the school better align its comprehensive school reform initiative with the district's and state's reforms?

II. Support Within the School

How supportive are teachers and other school staff of the selected reform model?

- Compared to the start of implementation, would you say that the staff is more or less supportive of the approach and model now? Why?
- What has been done at the district level to create support for the new reform approach and model?

III. Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

Has the school established *new* goals for student achievement as part of the comprehensive school reform implementation process?

- What role did the district have in establishing these goals?
- Were the new goals, at least in part, in response to district or state standards?

IV. Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

Since the CSRD approach and model have been implemented, are you aware of any changes in the school in any of the following areas?

- In what ways is the curriculum content now taught differently from what was taught before the model was adopted?
- In what ways are the instructional strategies different?
- Has assessment of student progress changed in any way?
- What changes have taken place in school governance or management?

If there have been changes, what has the district done to help the school bring about the changes?

V. Professional Development

What professional development has the district provided to help the school implement its reform model?

- Has the district supported any additional professional development activities for CSRD schools?
- How many professional development sessions are typically offered to teachers in your district each year (number of inservice days)?
- Is there a long-term strategy in the district for professional development? If so, please describe it.
- What additional professional development do you feel is needed districtwide?

VI. External Technical Support and Assistance

What kinds of external support or technical assistance have been provided by the district to the school to help implement the reform model?

- How much and what kind of support has been provided by the district? (Please give specific examples of support you have provided)
- How effective has this support been?
- What additional support is planned for the 1999–2000 year?
- What support is planned for the 2000–01 year?

Please describe the model provider role in implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model.

- What involvement has the model provider had during the current (1999–2000) school year?
- What involvement plans does the model provider have for the 2000–01 school year?

VII. Parental and Community Involvement

How supportive are parents and community members for the school program and the new reform model?

- What district level efforts have been made to enlist greater parent or community support?
- How successful have these efforts been?

VIII. Coordination of Resources

How does the school combine resources to implement the reform model and other programs effectively and efficiently?

- What other financial resources are available to support the school's reform and improvement efforts? (federal, state, district, private)

- What other "time" resources are available from the district to support the school's reform and improvement efforts?
- To what extent does the district help the school coordinate these resources?

IX. Evaluation Strategies

To what extent does the district use student achievement data to drive decisionmaking?

- What strategies are you using to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the current reform model at the school?
- How are you assessing the impact of the school reform approach and model on student outcomes?
- How are the school's and the district's evaluations of comprehensive school reform connected? The district's and the state's evaluations?

Overall

Please provide examples of how the changes in planning, curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment, or parent involvement have improved learning opportunities for students?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank the district staff for their time and helpful information.

Model Provider Telephone Interview

Winter 2000

Introduction

Introduce yourself and the purpose of your phone call by saying, "My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other researchers in the NCREL seven-state region under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research into the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. The focus of this study is on understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of school reform. [School] has been funded under CSRD and has indicated that you are their primary technical assistance provider. I would like to talk with you briefly about the assistance you have provided thus far, and the progress you feel [School] has made in implementing your reform model.

"Comments made by individuals will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential. (Optional) "I would like to tape-record our discussion to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased."

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Model Provider Name: _____ Date: _____

Phone No. _____ Location: _____

No. years experience providing assistance with this model: _____

Approximately how many days have you spent at the school so far this year?

How many days do you plan to spend at the school during the rest of the academic year?

Are there other model provider staff working with you in the school?

If so, how many days will they spend in the school this academic year?

A. School Context

- What do you view as the greatest challenges facing [school]?
- What strengths does [school] bring to this reform effort?
- How would you describe the school's relationship with the district?

B. Planning for Comprehensive School Reform

- When did you begin working with [School]?
- Were you involved in planning or writing the CSRD proposal?
- What services, if any, did you provide prior to the school receiving CSRD funding?
- When did key staff first receive training in the model you are using?
- When did the majority of school staff first receive training in the model?

C. Model Implementation Status

Let's discuss the reform model(s) being implemented at the school.

- What do you see as the relationship between your reform model and the school's comprehensive school reform approach? (Are they one and the same? How does your model fit into other reform activities or models?)
- Has school staff modified the model, or do you believe they are following it closely?
- (If using more than one model) Are you helping [School] to integrate the models?
- How fully do you believe your model has been implemented at [school]? (What proportion of the staff would you estimate are involved in the implementation?)

Please explain the plan or process for implementing the reform model and where [school] is in that process.

- What implementation plans do you have for the current (1999–2000) school year?
- Where do you expect to be by the end of the 1999–2000 school year?
- What implementation plans do you have for the 2000–01 school year?

What challenges or barriers have you faced in helping [school] implement the model?

- How are you addressing these barriers?
- How typical are these challenges for schools implementing your model?

I. Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components

How well is your reform model aligned with other programs at [school]?

II. Support Within the School

How supportive are teachers and other school staff of this reform model?

- What has been done at the school to create support for the new reform model?
- What evidence do you have that staff supports the reform efforts?
- What additional activities might be needed to ensure further support for the model?

III. Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

Has the school established *new* goals for student achievement as part of the comprehensive school reform implementation process?

- How were these goals and benchmarks established?
- Was this, at least in part, in response to district or state standards?
- Have the goals been modified since implementing the program at [school]?

IV. Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

Could you briefly describe the methods and strategies in your reform model and how teachers are implementing them?

- In what ways is the curriculum content now taught different from what was taught before the model was adopted?
- In what ways are the instructional strategies different?
- Has assessment of student progress changed in any way?
- What changes have taken place in school governance and management?

V. Professional Development

What professional development have teachers received to help implement your reform model?

- Is there a long-term strategy for professional development? If so, please describe it.
- How many professional development sessions have teachers been offered?
- What is the total amount of time you have spent providing teacher training at [school]?
- To what extent do you think these activities have changed what the staff teaches or how it teaches?
- What additional professional development is being planned or do you feel is needed?

VI. External Technical Support and Assistance

In addition to any formal staff development workshops, what other kinds of external support or technical assistance have been provided to the school to help implement your reform model?

- How effective has this support been?
- What additional support is planned for the 1999–2000 year?
- What support is planned for the 2000–01 year?

Please describe the district role in implementing the comprehensive school reform approach and model.

- How you have worked with the district to help the school implement its comprehensive school reform approach?
- What has this district done to help the school implement the school reform model or approach?
- How has the district helped the school address any challenges?

VII. Parental and Community Involvement

How supportive are parents and community members for the school program and your reform model?

- What efforts have been made to enlist greater parent or community support?
- How successful have these efforts been?

- What additional efforts are planned for the 1999–2000 school year?

VIII. Coordination of Resources

[Skip this topic]

IX. Evaluation Strategies

To what extent does the school use data to drive decisionmaking in implementation of the model?

- What strategies are you using to evaluate the implementation of the current reform model at the school?
- How are you assessing the impact of the school reform model on student outcomes?

Overall

Please provide examples of changes you have observed in [school] in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, school governance, or school management.

Do you have any other comments?

Thank the model provider for his or her time and helpful information.

Parent Focus Group Winter 2000

Introduction

Facilitator: Introduce yourself and the purpose of your visit to the school by saying, "My name is _____ and I work for _____. I am working with several other researchers in the NCREL seven-state region under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research into the implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program. The focus of this study is on understanding the factors that facilitate and inhibit the implementation of school reform. We have a set of questions for you, for the principal, for teaching staff, for district office staff who may be involved in CSRD, and for the model providers who are assisting school staff with implementation."

"Comments made by individuals will not be attributed to them and will be kept confidential. Copies of the reports will be distributed to participating schools."

(Optional) "I would like to tape-record the session to ensure that I do not miss any important information. The tape will be used to take notes from the interview and then will be erased."

School Name: _____ Location: _____

No. of Parents Participating: _____ Date: _____

How many children do you have enrolled at this school?

What grades are your children in?

I. School Context

- I would like to know a little about your school. What do you think are the strengths of this school? What problem areas do you think exist?

II. Planning for Comprehensive School Reform

- Were any of you involved in planning or writing your school's CSRD proposal?
- Have any of you received training related to the reform model your school is adopting?

III. Parent or Family Involvement

In what types of school-related activities have you participated during this school year? Please pick one or two of the activities and tell me how you learned about it and whether it met your expectations.

(Probe if necessary)

- Open house or back-to-school night
- PTA or other parent-teacher organization
- Parent advisory group or council
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Attended a class or school event (e.g., play or sporting event)
- Participated in a class field trip
- Volunteered in my child's classroom
- Volunteered for some other work at the school
- Adult literacy classes
- Parenting classes

Can you give me an example of something you have learned from these activities to help your child's learning?

(Probe if necessary)

- Making sure that your child is well-rested and prepared for the next school day
- Making sure that homework assignments are completed
- Providing a quiet place for homework
- Contacting teachers to discuss your child's progress

Please tell me how teachers or administrators in your school encourage parents and families to participate in school-related activities.

- Can you give me an example of what teachers or administrators do to encourage you to participate in school-related activities?
- Has the scheduling of these activities been a problem for parents (e.g., location, timing, or transportation)?
- What has the school done to eliminate language barriers that might make it difficult for some parents to participate?

IV. Communication Between the School and Parents

What information has the school given you that discusses the parents' or families' role in the education of their children?

- How did you get this information? (meetings, brochures, homework, calendars)
- Have you signed a written agreement? (a school-parent compact)
- Were the materials clear and easy to understand?
- If English is not their primary language, was the information presented in [name the language]?

Thinking about all of the parents/families in this community, including the ones who are not involved with the school or with their children's learning, in what ways do you think that communication between the school and parents/families could be improved?

V. Educational Program

Recently, the [school] adopted a new program called [Reform model used].

- What have you been told about the model or new program?
- How well do you think it meets the needs of your children?
- Are there any changes that you would like to see made to the new program?

How well does [school] match your idea of a good school?

Do you feel that the school expects a lot of your children? Please give me some examples of why you think this.

- The amount of homework given
- The level of difficulty of assignments
- The frequency of tests given
- The curriculum being taught
- Teachers set high standards
- Feedback to parents on how well students are doing

VI. Assessments

What kinds of information have you received on your child's school performance, such as test results, grades, etc.?

- Was the information easy to understand?
- Did the school provide you an opportunity to ask questions and respond to these materials?
- If English is not their primary language, was the information presented in [language]?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank the parents for their time and helpful information.

Classroom Observation Protocol

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Date: _____

No. years at this school: _____ No. years in this district: _____

Total no. years teaching experience: _____

Instructions to Observers: Before conducting classroom observations, determine why this classroom was selected and how it relates to the comprehensive school reform approach or model(s).

This classroom was selected for observation to show:

This classroom should illustrate the following aspects of the school's comprehensive school reform approach:

During the observation, take anecdotal notes. Focus your observations on the features of the classroom that are described above.

Post Observation Summary and Teacher Questions

How did this lesson demonstrate the reform approach being used?

- Curricular materials
- Instructional approach
- Teaching strategies
- Classroom management
- Coordination with other programs/resources
- Assessment practices

How did this lesson differ from what you might have done prior to school reform efforts?

Criteria for Classroom Selection

The classroom observations can be viewed as opportunities to illustrate how school reform manifests itself in the classroom. Ideally, classrooms will be chosen because they demonstrate instructional practices, curricular materials, assessment practices, grouping strategies, or other classroom features that have changed because of school reform activities taking place at the school.

Please arrange for me to observe two or more classrooms during my site visit to your school using the following criteria for selection:

- Teachers who are active participants in model implementation.
- Classrooms that represent a range of grade levels. For example, at the elementary level, please select one primary and one intermediate grade classroom unless your model focuses on only a few grade levels, in which case please select classrooms accordingly.
- One language arts lesson and one mathematics lesson.
- Classrooms where I am likely to observe change over time as a result of model implementation (if you are in the early stages of implementation and the teachers have not yet implemented model strategies, please select classrooms where you anticipate that I will be able to observe change over time).
- Teachers who are willing to provide me with a lesson plan prior to the observation and who will participate in a brief post-observation interview.
- Classrooms that I will be able to observe again in spring 2000 and in fall 2000.

Teachers are not being evaluated. The observations will be used to help describe the positive impact of school reform on classroom practices.

Summary of CSRD Staff Development

School:

Location:

[illegible]

Appendix B:
Data Collection Instruments for the Second Site Visit

Contents

Principal Interview Spring 2000	1
School Leadership Team Focus Group Spring 2000	6
Brief Teacher Interview Spring 2000	9
District Staff Interview Spring 2000	11
Model Provider Telephone Interview Spring 2000	13
Student Focus Group Spring 2000	15
Classroom Observation Protocol	18
Criteria for Classroom Selection	19
Summary of CSRD Staff Development	20

Principal Interview Spring 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During the initial site visit, we collected information about early implementation efforts. Although only a few months have transpired since our first visit, we would like to learn more about how CSR is impacting your school. As we consider each of the nine components of CSR, please identify the key activities or milestones, if any, that have been completed since our last meeting and the changes, if any, that have been made to your plans since our last meeting.

Comprehensive Design

- a. According to the information I gathered during my first site visit, the following objectives and activities have been the focus of your CSR efforts to date [list].
- b. Have you made any revisions to your program design since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Support Within the School

- a. At the time of my first site visit, support for school reform was [summarize level of staff support].
- b. Has the level of support for school reform changed since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. Have any activities taken place since my last site visit to address the level of staff support?

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

- a. At the time of my first site visit, your school did/did not have measurable goals for student performance that were tied to the state's content and student performance standards.
- b. Have the measurable goals or benchmarks for students changed or been added to since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

- a. Have any **curriculum** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. Have any **instructional** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. Have any **assessment** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- d. Have any **school governance/management** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Professional Development

- a. During my last site visit, you identified the following professional development activities that have taken place as a result of CSR. Would you please review this list [give copy of completed staff development form] and let me know if I have accurately summarized these activities?
- b. Have any additional professional development or training activities occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. What impact, if any, have these professional development activities had?
- d. What professional development activities are planned between now and September 2000?

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. At the time of my last site visit, you had received some/no technical assistance from your district office. Have you received any technical assistance in the implementation of your particular reform model(s) from the **school district office** since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. Have you received any technical assistance from the **school district office** in other topics related to school reform? If so, please describe.
- c. At the time of my last site visit, you had received the following assistance from your external model provider or other consultants [list dates, provider name, types of assistance]. Have you received any technical assistance in the implementation of your reform mode(s) from an **external model provider** since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- d. What is the total number of onsite visit days you have received this year from (1) your model provider: _____, and (2) other CSR consultants: _____.
- e. How helpful has this additional assistance from the district or external assistance providers been?

	<i>Very Helpful</i>			<i>Not Helpful</i>	
Assistance from school district	5	4	3	2	1
Assistance from regional education agency	5	4	3	2	1
Assistance from model providers	5	4	3	2	1
Assistance from other consultants	5	4	3	2	1

- f. What assistance, if any, have you received from other schools that are implementing the same CSR model? Please describe.
- g. What additional external assistance is planned for between now and September 2000?
- h. In what areas do you feel you still need external assistance?

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Have there been any changes in the level of parent and community involvement in your reform efforts since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. What additional activities have been planned to involve parents and the community?

Coordination of Resources

- a. During my last site visit, you identified the following resources that have contributed to school reform efforts in your school [List].
- b. Since my last site visit, have any additional resources been allocated for school reform efforts? If so, please describe.

Evaluation Strategies

- a. Since my last site visit, have any CSR evaluation activities have been implemented by the school or district? If so, please describe.
- b. Please describe any SEA evaluation activities you have participated in.
- c. Please describe any other evaluation activities you have participated in (e.g., Westat telephone survey; model provider evaluation activities).

Summary Comments

- a. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on the **staff** this year?
- b. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on **students** this year?

School Leadership Team Focus Group Spring 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During the initial site visit, we collected information about early implementation efforts. Although only a few months have transpired since our first visit, we would like to learn more about how CSR is impacting your school. As we consider each of nine components of CSR, please identify the key activities or milestones, if any, that have been completed since our last meeting and the changes, if any, that have been made to your plans since our last meeting.

Comprehensive Design

- a. According to the information I gathered during my first site visit, the following objectives and activities have been the focus of your CSR efforts to date [list].
- b. Have you made any revisions to your program design since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Support Within the School

- a. At the time of my first site visit, support for school reform was [summarize level of staff support].
- b. Has the level of support for school reform changed since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. What activities have taken place since the last site visit to address the level of staff support?

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

- a. At the time of my first site visit, your school did/did not have measurable goals for student performance that were tied to the state's content and student performance standards.

- b. Have the measurable goals or benchmarks for students changed or been added to since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

- a. Have any **curriculum** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. Have any **assessment** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. Have any **instructional** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- d. Have any **school governance/management** changes occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.

Professional Development

- a. During my last site visit, you identified the following professional development activities that have taken place as a result of CSR. Would you please review this list [give copy of completed staff development form] and let me know if I have accurately summarized these activities?
- b. Have any additional professional development or training activities occurred since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. What impact, if any, have these professional development activities had
- d. What professional development activities are planned between now and September 2000?

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. At the time of my last site visit, you had received some/no technical assistance from your district office. Have you received any technical assistance in the implementation of your reform model(s) from the **school district office** since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. At the time of my last site visit, you had received the following assistance from your external model provider [list dates and types of assistance]. Have you received any technical assistance in the implementation of your reform mode(s) from an **external model provider** since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- c. How helpful has this additional assistance from the district or external model providers been?
- d. What additional external assistance is planned for between now and September 2000?

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Have there been any changes in the level of parent and community involvement in your reform efforts since my last site visit? If so, please describe.
- b. What additional activities have been planned to involve parents and the community?

Coordination of Resources

- a. Since my last site visit, have any additional resources been allocated for school reform efforts? If so, please describe.

Evaluation Strategies

- a. Since my last site visit, have any CSR evaluation activities have been implemented? If so, please describe.

Summary Comments

- a. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on the **staff** this year?
- b. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on **students** this year?

Brief Teacher Interview Spring 2000

[Obtain copy of prep period schedule for all teachers. As time permits, visit teachers during their prep periods and ask if you may spend 5–10 minutes asking them a few brief questions about comprehensive school reform. Try to visit a cross section of grades or subject areas].

As you may aware, the North Central Regional Educational laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSRD implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During the initial site visit, we collected information about early implementation efforts from some of the staff. During this visit, we are talking to a larger sample of teachers to learn more about your impressions of school reform. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be associated with you, your school, or school district.

1. To your knowledge, is this school involved in any activities to improve the school? If yes, what activities are you aware of?
2. To what extent are you involved in these activities?

Highly Involved	5	4	3	2	1	Not At All Involved
-----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------
3. How have these activities **helped** you as a teacher?
4. How have these activities **challenged** you as a teacher?
5. What issues would you like to see the school improvement or leadership team address?
6. To what extent have school improvement efforts at your school changed your instructional practices?:
 - a. Not at all (I do things pretty much like I always have)
 - b. A little (I have adopted one or two new strategies or ideas)
 - c. A fair amount (I have adopted several new strategies or ideas)
 - d. A great deal (I have taken a new approach to instruction)

7. How frequently do you interact with other staff about instructional matters?
 - a. Rarely
 - b. Once or twice a month
 - c. At least once a week
 - d. Almost daily
8. Compared to last year, is the frequency of interaction with other staff about instructional matters:
 - a. More frequent
 - b. About the same
 - c. Less frequent

District Staff Interview Spring 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During my previous site visit, we discussed the reform approaches being implemented at _____ [school] this year. Although only a few months have transpired since our talk, I would like to obtain a brief update on changes and plans for the next few months.

Support Within the School

- a. At the time of my first site visit, support for school reform was [summarize level of staff support].
- b. Have you observed any changes in the level of staff support for the reform efforts in the past few months? If so, please describe.

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

- a. Are you aware of any changes the school has made this year in terms of curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment methods, or school management? If so, please describe.

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. At the time of our last discussion, the **district** had provided the following CSR assistance to [school]: [list dates, provider name, types of assistance]. Has the district provided any additional technical assistance, training, or other resources to the school to assist them with their reform efforts? If so, please describe.
- b. What additional district assistance or resources are planned for between now and September 2000?

- c. At the time of our last discussion, the **external model provider** had provided the following assistance to [school]: [list dates, provider name, types of training or assistance.] In your opinion, how helpful has this assistance been to the school staff?

Extremely helpful

5

4

3

2

Not very helpful

1

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Are you aware of any changes in the level of parent and community involvement in the reform efforts of [school] since we last spoke? If so, please describe.

Coordination of Resources

- a. Since my last visit, have any additional district or outside resources been allocated for [school]'s reform efforts? If so, please describe.

Evaluation Strategies

- a. Have you helped the school evaluate its progress in the **implementation** of its reform model? If so, please describe.
- b. Have you provided any data to [school] this year to help the school evaluate changes in **student outcomes**? If so, please describe.

Summary Comments

- a. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on the **staff** this year?
- b. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on **students** this year?

Model Provider Telephone Interview

Spring 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During our previous phone conversation, we discussed the training and onsite assistance you have provided to _____ [school] this year. Although only a few months have transpired since our talk, I would like to obtain a brief update on additional training or assistance provided and plans for the next few months.

Support Within the School

- a. At the time of my first site visit, support for school reform was [summarize level of staff support].
- b. Have you observed any changes in the level of staff support for the reform efforts in the past few months? If so, please describe.

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. At the time of our last discussion, you had provided the following assistance to [school]: [list dates, provider name, types of assistance]. Have you provided any additional on-site technical assistance or training in implementing your reform mode(s) since then? If so, please describe.
- b. What is the total number of on-site visit days you have provided this year? _____.
- c. What additional on-site assistance is planned for between now and September 2000?

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Are you aware of any changes in the level of parent and community involvement in the reform efforts of [school] since we last spoke? If so, please describe.

Evaluation Strategies

- a. Have you collected any data from [school] this year to help the school evaluate its progress in the **implementation** of your reform model? If so, please describe.
- b. Have you collected any data from [school] this year to help the school evaluate changes in **student outcomes**? If so, please describe.

Summary Comments

- a. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on the **staff** this year?
- b. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on **students** this year?

Model Provider Written Survey

I would like to mail you a brief written survey concerning the nine areas of CSR and the extent to which the school has made each area a focus of their reform efforts. It should take about 10 minutes to complete the survey. We are asking the principal and a sample of teachers at the school to respond to similar questions. May I have your mailing address for the survey?

Student Focus Group Spring 2000

School: _____ Respondent Grade Levels: _____

[Notes to interviewer: Ask the principal to identify 5 to 7 students at the upper end of the school's grade range. Ask the open-ended question in each section; then follow up with probes about the frequency of various activities. The purpose of these questions is to gain insight into how students may be experiencing school reform, and to find out whether students are aware of changes that have been made in the classroom or school. Therefore, you should focus on those areas that are related to the reform models being implemented. For example, if the reform focuses on mathematics, you might want to target the questions to what students do in their math classes. If the reform efforts do not have a curriculum focus, ask the students to consider all their classes.]

"Several schools in your state received money this year to improve teaching and learning at their schools. I am visiting some of these to schools to talk with the principal and teachers about what kinds of changes they have been working on. I am also interested in the opinions of students in this school and the other schools. You have been selected by your principal to be a part of this discussion. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. When I ask each question, anyone who wants to can give an answer. You don't have to answer a question if you have no opinion about it."

1. Let's talk about the kinds of things you do in your classes.

Type of Classroom Activity	Frequency 3-Usually 2-Sometimes 1-Hardly ever or never	Comments
<i>What kinds of learning activities take place on a typical day in your classroom [or classes]? [may ask separately about language arts/English, math, science, etc. as appropriate]</i>		
Probes:		
a. Your teacher talks or explains things		
b. Your teacher asks questions and calls on students to give answers		
c. Your teacher reads aloud to the class		
d. Students work together in groups to finish assignments		
e. Students work with a partner to finish assignments		

Type of Classroom Activity	Frequency 3-Usually 2-Sometimes 1-Hardly ever or never	Comments
f. Students work on their own to finish assignments		
g. Students work on projects that include more than one subject, such as language arts and science, or math and social studies		
<i>What kinds of learning materials do you use in your classroom [classes]?</i>		
<i>Probes:</i>		
h. Textbooks		
i. Worksheets		
j. Computers		
k. Other materials in the classroom, such as videos, tapes, math manipulatives, science materials, or learning games		
<i>How do you find out how well you are doing in your classes?</i>		
<i>Probes:</i>		
l. Students find out how they are doing in class by taking tests or quizzes		
m. Students find out how they are doing in class by getting graded assignments back from the teachers		
<i>How can students at your school get help with school work if they need it?</i>		
<i>Probes:</i>		
n. Students get help by asking the teacher questions		
o. Students get help by asking each other questions		
p. Students get help after school from aides, tutors, or a homework club		
q. Students get help from their parents		
<i>What is expected of you at this school?</i>		
<i>Probes:</i>		
r. Teachers expect students to do a lot of work in class		

Type of Classroom Activity	Frequency	Comments
	3-Usually 2-Sometimes 1-Hardly ever or never	
s. Teachers expect students to do a lot of homework		
t. Parents expect students to work hard at school		
u. Teachers expect students to follow the rules and behave themselves at school		
v. Parents expect students to follow the rules and behave themselves at school		

2. What do you think are the best things about this school? What makes this school special?
3. If you could make changes here to make this school a better place to learn, what kinds of changes would you make?
4. Compared to last year (if you were at this school), have you noticed any changes in the way things are taught or done at this school? If so, please describe.

Classroom Observation Protocol

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Date: _____

No. years at this school: _____ No. years in this district: _____

Total no. years teaching experience: _____

Instructions to Observers: Before conducting classroom observations, determine why this classroom was selected and how it relates to the comprehensive school reform approach or model(s).

This classroom was selected for observation to show:

This classroom should illustrate the following aspects of the school's comprehensive school reform approach:

During the observation, take anecdotal notes. Focus your observations on the features of the classroom that are described above.

Post Observation Summary and Teacher Questions

1. How did this lesson demonstrate the reform approach being used?

Curricular materials

Instructional approach

Teaching strategies

Classroom management

Coordination with other programs/resources

Assessment practices

2. How did this lesson differ from what you might have done prior to school reform efforts?

Criteria for Classroom Selection

The classroom observations can be viewed as opportunities to illustrate how school reform manifests itself in the classroom. Ideally, classrooms will be chosen, because they demonstrate instructional practices, curricular materials, assessment practices, grouping strategies, or other classroom features that have changed because of school reform activities taking place at the school.

Please arrange for me to observe two or more classrooms during my site visit to your school using the following criteria for selection:

- Teachers who are active participants in model implementation.
- Classrooms that represent a range of grade levels. For example, at the elementary level, please select one primary and one intermediate grade classroom unless your model focuses on only a few grade levels, in which case please select classrooms accordingly.
- One language arts lesson and one mathematics lesson.
- Classrooms where I am likely to observe change over time as a result of model implementation (if you are in the early stages of implementation and the teachers have not yet implemented model strategies, please select classrooms where you anticipate that I will be able to observe change over time).
- Teachers who are willing to provide me with a lesson plan prior to the observation and who will participate in a brief post-observation interview.
- Classrooms that I will be able to observe again in spring 2000 and in fall 2000.

Teachers are not being evaluated. The observations will be used to help describe the positive impact of school reform on classroom practices.

Appendix C:
Data-Collection Instruments for the Third Site Visit

Contents

Principal Interview Fall 2000	1
Leadership Team Focus Group Fall 2000	5
Brief Teacher Interview Fall 2000	8
Model Provider Telephone Interview Fall 2000	10
Classroom Observation Protocol Fall 2000	13
Criteria for Classroom Selection	15
Fall 2000 CSR Checklist	16

Principal Interview

Fall 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During the first two site visits, we collected information about early implementation efforts. Although only a few months have transpired since our last visit, we would like to learn more about how CSR is impacting your school. I would also like to review with you some of the demographic characteristics of your school.

Comprehensive Design

- a. According to the information gathered during the first two site visits, the following objectives and activities have been the focus of your CSR efforts to date [list].
- b. Have you made any revisions to your program design since last spring? If so, please describe.
- c. Have there been any significant events or issues since last spring which will impact the CSR effort this year? (If yes, explain).
- d. What will be the major focus of your CSR efforts this year?

Support Within the School

- a. Have there been any staffing changes at the school since last spring? (If yes, explain).
- b. If there was less than 100% involvement this year, what efforts are being made to involve all staff in the reform model implementation? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Written commitment from staff
- ☐ Additional training for staff
- ☐ Peer coaching or assistance
- ☐ Enlisting involvement of key staff
- ☐ Involvement of staff through committees
- ☐ Use of results to show effectiveness
- ☐ Transfer nonsupporters to other schools
- ☐ Other (specify):

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

(Covered by checklist)

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

- a. Have any **curriculum** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- b. Have any **instructional** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- c. Have any **assessment** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- d. Have any **school governance/management** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.

Professional Development

- a. During the previous site visits, you identified the following professional development activities that have taken place as a result of CSR. Would you please review this list [give copy of completed staff development form] and let me know if I have accurately summarized these activities?
- b. Have any additional professional development or training activities occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- c. What impact, if any, have these professional development activities had on CSR implementation this year?

- d. What professional development activities are planned between now and the end of the school year?

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. In what areas, if any, do you feel you still need external assistance?
- b. How does your contract with your external technical assistance provider [model provider] differ from last year?
- c. What technical assistance related to CSR is the district providing this year?

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Have there been any changes in the level of parent or community involvement in your reform efforts since last spring? If so, please describe.

Coordination of Resources

- a. Compared to last year, are your CSR efforts this year:
- _____ Better coordinated with other reform efforts and resources
- _____ No change
- _____ Less coordinated with other reform efforts and resources

Evaluation Strategies

(Covered by checklist)

Summary

- a. What have been the greatest challenges to your CSR efforts thus far?

- b. How will these challenges be addressed this year?
- c. What differences could I expect to see in your school if I returned next spring?

Leadership Team Focus Group

Fall 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During the first two site visits, we collected information about early implementation efforts. Although only a few months have transpired since our last visit, we would like to learn more about how CSR is impacting your school.

Comprehensive Design

- a. According to the information gathered during the first two site visits, the following objectives and activities have been the focus of your CSR efforts to date [list].
- b. Have you made any revisions to your program design since last spring? If so, please describe.
- c. Have there been any significant events or issues since last spring which will impact the CSR effort this year? (If yes, explain).
- d. What will be the major focus of your CSR efforts this year?

Support Within the School

- a. Have there been any staffing changes at the school since last spring? (If yes, explain).
- b. If less than 100% involvement this year, what efforts are being made to involve all staff in the reform model implementation? (Check all that apply)

☐ Written commitment from staff
☐ Additional training for staff
☐ Peer coaching or assistance
☐ Enlisting involvement of key staff
☐ Involvement of staff through committees
☐ Use of results to show effectiveness
☐ Transfer nonsupporters to other schools
☐ Other (specify):

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

(Covered by checklist)

Effective Research-Based Methods and Strategies

- Have any **curriculum** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- Have any **instructional** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- Have any **assessment** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- Have any **school governance/management** changes occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.

Professional Development

- During the previous site visits, you identified the following professional development activities that have taken place as a result of CSR. Would you please review this list [give copy of completed staff development form] and let me know if I have accurately summarized these activities?
- Have any additional professional development or training activities occurred since last spring? If so, please describe.
- What impact, if any, have these professional development activities had on CSR implementation this year?

- d. What professional development activities are planned between now and the end of the school year?

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. In what areas, if any, do you feel you still need external assistance?
- b. How does your contract with your external technical assistance provider [model provider] differ from last year?
- c. What technical assistance related to CSR is the district providing this year?

Parental and Community Involvement

- a. Have there been any changes in the level of parent or community involvement in your reform efforts since last spring? If so, please describe.

Coordination of Resources

- a. Compared to last year, are your CSR efforts this year:
- _____ Better coordinated with other reform efforts and resources
- _____ No change
- _____ Less coordinated with other reform efforts and resources

Evaluation Strategies

(Covered by checklist)

Summary

- a. What have been the greatest challenges to your CSR efforts thus far?
- b. How will these challenges be addressed this year?
- c. What differences could I expect to see in your school if I returned next spring?

Brief Teacher Interview

Fall 2000

[Obtain copy of prep period and lunch schedule for all teachers. As time permits, visit teachers during these times and ask if you may spend 5 to 10 minutes asking them a few brief questions about comprehensive school reform. Try to visit a cross section of grades or subject areas].

As you may aware, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSRD implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During previous site visits, we collected information about early implementation efforts from some of the staff. During this visit, we are talking to additional teachers to learn more about your impressions of school reform. Your responses are strictly confidential and will not be associated with you, your school, or school district.

1. To your knowledge, is this school involved in any activities to improve the school? If yes, what activities are you aware of? [Provide a few prompts about the CSR effort but if the teacher seems unaware of key activities, discontinue the interview].
2. To what extent are you involved in implementing these activities?
3. Highly Involved 5 4 3 2 1 Not At All Involved
4. What changes, if any, have you made in **curriculum or use of technology** as a result of CSR?
5. What changes, if any, have you made in **instructional strategies or student grouping** practices as a result of CSR?
6. What changes, if any, have you made in your **pedagogical approach** (such as integrated thematic instruction, project-based learning, multiple intelligences, etc.)?
7. What changes, if any, have you observed in **school governance or management** as a result of CSR efforts?

8. What changes, if any, have you made in the **use of student assessment information** to guide instruction?
9. Have there been any changes in the frequency of your interactions with other staff about instructional matters? (If yes, please elaborate).

Thank you for your assistance!

Model Provider Telephone Interview

Fall 2000

As you may recall, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) is conducting a seven-state study of CSR implementation. The purpose of the study is to develop a regional summary of the progress schools have made in implementing the nine components of school reform.

During a previous phone conversation, we discussed the training and onsite assistance you have provided to _____ [school] during the 1999-2000 year and the assistance you were planning to provide during the summer of 2000. I would like to obtain a brief update on the summer training and any additional training or assistance provided and plans for the coming school year.

- a. Reform model: _____
- b. When did you begin providing technical assistance to this school? (MM/YY) _____
- c. How many other schools are you working with to implement this reform model? _____
- d. How many of these schools are within a one-hour drive of this school? _____

Support Within the School

- a. Have you observed any changes in the level of staff support for or involvement in the reform efforts over the last year? If so, please describe.

Research-Based Methods and Strategies

As a result of comprehensive school reform:

- a. What changes, if any, have you observed in curriculum or use of technology?
- b. What changes, if any, have you observed in instructional strategies or student grouping practices?

- c. What changes, if any, have you observed in the **pedagogical approach** (such as integrated thematic instruction, project-based learning, multiple intelligences, etc.)?
- d. What changes, if any, have you observed in **school governance or management**?
- e. What changes, if any, have you observed in the **use of student assessment information** to guide instruction?

External Technical Assistance and Support

- a. At the time of our last discussion, you had provided the following assistance to [school]: [list dates, provider name, types of assistance]. Have you provided any additional onsite technical assistance or training in implementing your reform mode(s) since then? If so, please describe.
- b. What is the total number of on-site visit days you provided last year including summer 1999 and summer 2000? _____.
- c. What technical assistance activities are you planning to provide during the 2000–2001 school year?

Evaluation Strategies

- a. Have you collected any data from [school] to help the school evaluate its progress in the **implementation** of your reform model? If so, please describe.
- b. Have you collected any data from [school] to help the school evaluate changes in **student outcomes**? If so, please describe.

Summary Comments

- a. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on the **staff** since the beginning of the reform implementation?
- b. Overall, what impact do you think CSR activities have had on **students** since the beginning of the reform implementation?
- c. Compared with other schools using this reform approach, how would you rate the progress of this school in implementing its reform plans? (Circle one)

- 5-Nearly all plan components have been successfully implemented (75-100%)
- 4-Most plan components have been successfully implemented (50-74%)
- 3-Some plan components have been successfully implemented (25-49%)
- 2-A few plan components have been successfully implemented (1-24%)
- 1-No plan components have been successfully implemented

Classroom Observation Protocol

Fall 2000

School Name: _____ Location: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Date: _____

No. years at this school: _____ No. years in this district: _____

Total no. years teaching experience: _____

Instructions to Observers: Before conducting classroom observations, determine why this classroom was selected and how it relates to the comprehensive school reform approach or model(s). (See Criteria for Classroom Selection to make sure this classroom qualifies).

This classroom was selected for observation to show:

This classroom should illustrate the following aspects of the school's comprehensive school reform approach:

During the observation, take anecdotal notes. Focus your observations on the features of the classroom that are described above and practices that exemplify the school's CSR approach.

Post-Observation Summary and Teacher Questions

1. How did this lesson demonstrate the reform approach being used?

Curricular materials or technology

Learning theory or instructional approach

Teaching strategies and grouping

Classroom management

Coordination with other staff, programs, and resources

Assessment practices

2. How did this lesson differ from what you did prior to school reform efforts?

3. Did you participate in any CSR professional development activities that helped you implement this lesson? If yes, please elaborate.

Criteria for Classroom Selection

The classroom observations can be viewed as opportunities to illustrate how school reform manifests itself in the classroom. Ideally, classrooms will be chosen because they demonstrate instructional practices, curricular materials, assessment practices, grouping strategies, or other classroom features that have changed because of school reform activities taking place at the school.

Please arrange for me to observe two or more classrooms during my site visit to your school using the following criteria for selection:

- Teachers who are active participants in CSR implementation; classrooms where I am likely to observe new instructional materials or strategies.
- Classrooms that represent a range of grade levels. For example, at the elementary level, please select one primary and one intermediate grade classroom unless your model focuses on only a few grade levels, in which case please select classrooms accordingly.
- One language arts lesson and one mathematics lesson.
- Teachers who are willing to provide me with a lesson plan prior to the observation and who will participate in a brief post-observation interview.

Teachers are not being evaluated. The observations will be used to help describe the positive impact of school reform on classroom practices.

Fall 2000 CSR Checklist

School Characteristics

Please complete the questions for the 1999–2000 school year.

School Name/Location:	
1. What percentage of the students are non-Caucasian?	_____ %
2. Is the non-Caucasian student population:	a. ____ Predominantly one ethnic or racial group b. ____ Composed of many different ethnic groups?
3. If a dominant group, what is the racial or ethnic category?	a. ____ African-American b. ____ Latino c. ____ Asian d. ____ Other (specify):
4. What percentage of students have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)?	_____ %
5. What percentage of students are classified as "Limited English Proficient" or "English Language Learners?"	_____ %
6. What percentage of students met state standards for math in 2000?	Grade level: _____ Percent: _____ Grade level: _____ Percent: _____
7. What percentage of students met state standards for reading in 2000?	Grade level: _____ Percent: _____ Grade level: _____ Percent: _____
8. What is the average annual student mobility rate at your school?	_____ % Average mobility rate
9. What is the average daily attendance at your school?	_____ % Average daily attendance
10. What proportion of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches?	_____ % Eligible for free/reduced price lunches
11. What has been the average teacher turnover rate in the last two years (1998–99 and 1999–2000)?	_____ % Average teacher turnover rate

12. Of the teachers who have left over the past two years, how many of those were on the leadership team?	_____ #Teachers who were on the leadership team
13. How many teachers at your school have less than two years of teaching experience?	_____ #Teachers with < 2 years experience
14. Since the CSR plan was written, has the school changed principals?	☐ Yes, new principal for 1999–2000 year ☐ Yes, new principal for 2000–2001 year ☐ No
15. How strong is the leadership provided by the principal? (Consider instructional leadership, advocacy for reform, teacher views)	3 Strong, effective leadership skills 2 Average leadership skills 1 Below average leadership skills
16. Has there been any change in district personnel assigned to the school as the CSR contact?	☐ Yes ☐ Not applicable ☐ No
17. Have there been any changes in the school's finances which <i>negatively</i> affected school reform efforts? (For example, budget cuts, bond failures, termination of grants).	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please describe:
18. Have there been any changes in the school's finances which <i>positively</i> affected school reform efforts? (For example, new grants, budget increases).	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please describe:
19. Were there any changes in district policy that affected school reform efforts at the school?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please describe:
20. To what extent has the school modified or expanded the original CSR plan?	a. ☐ No changes to the plan b. ☐ Minor changes to the plan c. ☐ Significant changes to the plan d. ☐ Completely new plan
21. Has there been a change or modification in the reform model(s)?	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please describe:

22. Has there been a change in the technical assistance provider(s)?	☐ Yes
	☐ No If yes, please describe:

Explanatory Notes:

Comprehensive Reform Design With Aligned Components

School Name/Location:	
23. What types of school improvement plans is this school using?	a. ☐ Title I schoolwide e. ☐ State mandated (e.g., CIP) f. ☐ District mandated g. ☐ CSR plan h. ☐ Other (specify):
24. Are any of the above plans integrated into the CSR plan?	☐ Yes, the CSR plan is the "umbrella" for at least 1 other plan ☐ Yes, the CSR plan has the same objectives and activities as at least 1 other plan ☐ No, other plans are separate from the CSR plan
25. Which of these elements are addressed by the CSR plan?	a. ☐ Instructional strategies i. ☐ Curriculum j. ☐ Assessment k. ☐ Technology l. ☐ Classroom management m. ☐ Professional development n. ☐ Parent involvement o. ☐ School management p. ☐ Other (specify):
26. To what extent are the above elements aligned? (i.e., there is a clear connection among the goals and plan elements)	a. ☐ Clearly aligned, explicit connections among elements q. ☐ Somewhat aligned, some connections among elements r. ☐ Not well aligned, few connections among elements
27. Did the CSR plan describe how all students (including special populations) would be assisted in meeting state content and performance standards?	☐ Yes ☐ No
28. Did the CSR plan use a school needs assessment to identify needs?	☐ Yes ☐ No
29. What proportion of the elements of the current CSR plan have been implemented?	a. ☐ School has implemented all elements of the plan s. ☐ School has implemented most (> 75%) elements of the plan t. ☐ School has implemented between 50–75% of the elements of the plan u. ☐ School has implemented some (25–49%) of the elements of the plan v. ☐ School has implemented very few (<25%) elements of the plan

30. The school's approach to comprehensive school reform includes:	a. ☐ No specific reform model w. ☐ A primary reform model that defines the CSR approach x. ☐ More than one reform model y. ☐ Multiple reform activities that constitute a comprehensive approach to CSR z. ☐ Multiple reform activities that do not seem to fit together well in a comprehensive CSR approach
31. The school began implementing its reform model:	a. ☐ Prior to receiving CSR funding aa. ☐ After receiving CSR funding

Explanatory Notes:

Support Within the School

School Name/Location:	
1. According to the principal, what percent of staff are involved in implementing the current model or reform approach?	_____ %
2. According to the teachers, what percent of staff are involved in implementing the current model or reform approach?	_____ %
3. If less than 100% involvement, what efforts were made to involve all staff in the reform model implementation? (Check all that apply)	a. _____ Written commitment from staff b. _____ Additional training for staff c. _____ Peer coaching or assistance d. _____ Enlisting involvement of key staff e. _____ Involvement of staff through committees f. _____ Use of results to show effectiveness g. _____ Transfer nonsupporters to other schools h. _____ Other (specify):
4. Who made the decision to implement this reform model?	a. _____ The principal acting alone b. _____ The principal and leadership team or other selected group of teachers c. _____ The entire staff d. _____ Decision made outside the school, e.g. district administration e. _____ Other (specify)
5. How did the school gather information about the model prior to selection? (Check all that apply)	a. _____ Presentation by model provider bb. _____ Attendance at conference cc. _____ Visit to school(s) implementing this model. dd. _____ Read research information related to this model. ee. _____ District selected the model ff. _____ Other (specify)
6. Were other reform models considered in addition to the one implemented?	_____ Yes _____ No

Explanatory Notes:

Measurable Goals and Benchmarks

School Name/Location:	
1. Was a new or revised set of goals developed for the school as a result of CSR? (Check all that apply)	☐ Yes, new goals were added ☐ Yes, existing goals were revised ☐ No changes in goals
2. How has the school's method of assessing goal attainment changed as a result of CSR?	a. ☐ No change gg. ☐ Added or revised benchmarks hh. ☐ Developed or used rubrics ii. ☐ Used multiple assessment methods jj. ☐ Used more frequent assessments kk. ☐ Improved alignment of standards and assessments ll. ☐ Made better use of assessment data for planning and decisionmaking mm. ☐ Other (specify)
3. Are the school's goals and benchmarks aligned with: State standards?	☐ Yes, extensive alignment ☐ Yes, some alignment ☐ No evidence of alignment
District standards?	☐ Yes, extensive alignment ☐ Yes, some alignment ☐ No evidence of alignment
Other standards? (e.g., NCTM, NCTE) (Specify):	☐ Yes, extensive alignment ☐ Yes, some alignment ☐ No evidence of alignment
4. Who is responsible for monitoring goal attainment? (Check all that apply)	a. ☐ Each staff member nn. ☐ The principal oo. ☐ The principal and leadership team or selected group of teachers pp. ☐ Model provider qq. ☐ District staff rr. ☐ SEA ss. ☐ Other (specify)

5. To what extent have the teachers who are involved with reform implementation used the goals and benchmarks in the CSR plan to guide instruction?	a. ☐ Most (75-100% of instruction linked to goals) tt. ☐ Considerable (50-74% of instruction linked to goals) uu. ☐ Some (25-49% of instruction linked to goals) vv. ☐ Little (0-24% of instruction linked to goals)
6. What have been the major issues with regard to using goals and benchmarks to guide instruction? How were these issues addressed?	

Explanatory Notes:

Research-Based Methods and Strategies

School Name/Location:	
As a result of CSR participation, did this school: 1. Add a new curricular or instructional program? <i>A curricular or instructional program is a clearly defined set of practices and procedures that include a specific set of instructional materials.</i>	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what program?
2. Implement any new instructional strategies or change student-grouping practices? <i>Instructional strategies are a specific set of actions used to promote learning (e.g., higher order questioning, cooperative learning, small group instruction, individualized computer instruction, the use of math manipulatives, etc.). These strategies may be part of an instructional program (see question 1).</i> <i>Grouping practices include multiage classrooms, special education inclusion, looping classes, etc.</i>	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how?
3. Promote the adoption of a particular learning theory/pedagogical approach? <i>A learning theory or pedagogical approach is a way of thinking about and organizing curriculum and instruction (e.g., integrated thematic instruction, project-based learning, or multiple intelligences). It does not include specific instructional materials.</i>	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what theory/approach?
4. Make governance or management changes? <i>Governance or management changes include block scheduling, interdisciplinary teams, reform committees, greater teacher empowerment, etc.</i>	☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, what changes?

5. How far along is this school with the implementation of classroom-based curricular or instructional change?	a. ____ Almost all teachers (>75%) have implemented new curricular/instructional program or strategies. ww. ____ Most teachers (51–75%) have implemented new curricular/instructional program or strategies. xx. ____ Some teachers (26–50%) have implemented new curricular/instructional program or strategies. yy. ____ A few teachers (1–25%) have implemented new curricular/instructional program or strategies. zz. ____ No teachers have implemented new curricular/instructional program or strategies.
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Explanatory Notes:

Professional Development

School Name/Location:				
a. Which of the following were barriers to effective professional development and training? (Check all that apply)	a.	☐ Access to high-quality trainers		
	b.	☐ Insufficient funds for professional development		
	c.	☐ Insufficient time for professional development		
	d.	☐ Access to substitute teachers		
	e.	☐ Teacher contract issues (e.g., extra time or pay)		
	f.	☐ Staff turnover		
	g.	☐ Lack of follow-up support and training		
	h.	☐ Lack of staff involvement in the selection of models and methods		
	i.	☐ Lack of staff involvement in key decisions about professional development		
	j.	☐ Lack of an evaluation system for training and professional development		
	k.	☐ Content of training/professional development not matched to staff or student needs		
	l.	☐ Other (specify):		
2. To what extent have each of the following areas been a focus of professional development at this school?		1—Not a focus, 2—Minor focus, 3—Major focus		
a.	Develop new instructional skills and strategies	1	2	3
b.	Develop and implement new curriculum	1	2	3
c.	Use of assessment to guide instruction	1	2	3
d.	Use of technology	1	2	3
e.	New attitudes or theories about learning	1	2	3
f.	Parent involvement	1	2	3
g.	Classroom management	1	2	3
h.	Working with other staff to plan or deliver instruction	1	2	3
i.	Leadership skills	1	2	3
j.	Communication skills	1	2	3
k.	Other educational issues and topics (specify):	1	2	3

3. To what extent have each of the following professional development methods or strategies been used as part of the CSR effort?	1—Never, 2—Once or twice, 3—Several times, 4—Extensively
a. Multiday training for core team	1 2 3 4
b. Multiday training for all staff	1 2 3 4
c. Full-day training for entire staff	1 2 3 4
d. Partial-day training for entire staff	1 2 3 4
e. Off-site conferences or workshops for selected staff	1 2 3 4
f. Site visits or networking with other schools for selected staff	1 2 3 4
g. Instructional modeling by program or model expert	1 2 3 4
h. Teacher observations and feedback from model expert (internal or external)	1 2 3 4
i. Teacher observations and feedback from peers	1 2 3 4
j. Study group discussions of reading or videos	1 2 3 4
k. Independent reading or video viewing	1 2 3 4
4. How many district-sponsored professional development days did the school have during the 1999–2000 school year (including summer 1999)?	_____ Total number of district professional development days for 1999–2000
5. How many of these days were devoted to CSR-related activities?	_____ Number of above days devoted to CSR-related activities
6. How many of these days were devoted to state content and performance standards?	_____ Number of district days devoted to state content and performance standards
7. How many of these days were devoted to state assessments?	_____ Number of district days devoted to state assessments

Explanatory Notes:

External Technical Assistance

School Name/Location:	
1. The <i>majority</i> of the technical assistance on the reform model is provided by: (Please select one response). a. One on-site technical assistance provider for the reform model b. More than one on-site technical assistance provider for the reform model c. School district staff who has been trained by the model developer d. No specific technical assistance provider (t.a. is provided by various consultants to address components of the reform approach) e. Do not receive any external t.a. f. Other (please explain):	a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____ e. _____ f. _____
2. Satisfaction with the above technical assistance provider.	4 Completely satisfied 3 Mostly satisfied 2 Somewhat satisfied 1 Not at all satisfied 0 No opinion or not applicable
2a. How satisfied are <u>teachers on the leadership team</u> with the t.a. provider?	4 3 2 1 0
2b. How satisfied are <u>teachers who are not on the leadership team</u> with the t.a. provider?	4 3 2 1 0
2c. How satisfied is the <u>principal</u> with the t.a. provider?	4 3 2 1 0
3. In what <i>other</i> ways has the school utilized t.a. on its CSR model? Please check all that apply. a. One model provider representative gave on-site technical assistance. b. More than one model provider representative gave on-site t.a. c. The model provider offered training or conferences off-site. d. The model provider trained an in-school expert or facilitator. e. The district provided a staff person(s) to assist the school with specific areas of its CSR model. f. External consultants (not from the district) assisted the school with specific areas of its CSR model. g. The school had an arrangement with another school who has adopted the same model to conduct site visits, share information, etc. h. A regional educational agency or laboratory assisted the school with specific areas of the school's CSR model. i. Other (please explain):	a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____ e. _____ f. _____ g. _____ h. _____ i. _____

4. What is the total number of on-site technical assistance days you have received this year from:	a. _____ Model provider b. _____ Other CSR consultants
5. Does the state educational agency provide t.a. that is directly related to the school's CSR approach?	_____ Yes _____ No
6. What types of CSR-related technical assistance did the school receive from its state educational agency (SEA) while planning for CSR or since receiving CSR funds? (Check all that apply). a. Workshop(s) where research-based school reform models were showcased. b. Workshop(s) on CSR issues, such as data-based needs assessments, program accountability, data-driven decisionmaking, or planning and preparing for CSR. c. SEA Web site that offers information or links to information about CSR resources, such as federal guidance, regional educational laboratory information, or research-based models. d. Mailings about CSR, such as CSR legislation and federal guidance. e. Videos about CSR issues, such as research-based models. f. Assistance with CSR grant writing. g. Technical assistance provided as part of SEA's evaluation of CSR. h. Technical assistance provided by a SEA-sponsored educator. i. Other (specify):	a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____ e. _____ f. _____ g. _____ h. _____ i. _____
7. How satisfied is school staff with the CSR-related t.a. provided by the SEA? (Circle one)	4 Completely satisfied 3 Mostly satisfied 2 Somewhat satisfied 1 Not at all satisfied 0 No opinion or not applicable
8. How much of the school's total 99-00 CSR budget was spent on external technical assistance and professional development (including travel for technical assistance providers)	\$ _____ Total amount of 99-00 CSR budget \$ _____ Amount of 99-00 CSR budget spent on external technical assistance
9. How much money from other sources (e.g., Title I, Eisenhower, district) did the school spend on technical assistance and professional development in 99-00?	\$ _____ Amount from other sources spent on t.a. in 99-00.

Explanatory Notes:

Parent and Local Community Involvement

School name/location:	
1. How many parents were involved in the CSR planning process?	_____ # involved
2. How many community members (not parents) were involved in the CSR planning process?	_____ # involved
3. Does the school have a specific plan of action for increasing the involvement of parents in CSR planning and decisionmaking?	☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the school have a specific plan of action for increasing the involvement of the local community in CSR planning and decisionmaking?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Implementing School Reform

1. How many parents serve on the school leadership team?	_____ # involved
2. How many local community organizations and businesses serve on the school leadership team?	_____ # involved
3. Does the school seek input from parents regarding the implementation of school reform?	☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the school seek input from the local community regarding the implementation of school reform?	☐ Yes ☐ No
5. If yes on #3 or #4, how does the school get input?	☐ Meetings ☐ Surveys ☐ Other: _____

General Parent and Community Involvement

1. Was parent involvement identified as a goal in the school's CSR plan?	☐ Yes ☐ No
2. What proportion of the school's parents are aware of the school's reform efforts?	☐ 75% or more ☐ 50 to 74% ☐ 25 to 49% ☐ Less than 25%

3. What proportion of the community members are aware of the school's reform efforts?	☐ 75% or more ☐ 50 to 74% ☐ 25 to 49% ☐ Less than 25%
4. What actions has the school taken to make parents more aware of the CSR effort?	☐ Meetings ☐ Newspaper articles ☐ Special events ☐ Other (specify):
5. What actions has the school taken to make the local community more aware of the CSR effort?	☐ Meetings ☐ Newspaper articles ☐ Special events ☐ Other (specify):
6. What actions has the school taken since CSR began to increase parent involvement in general? (Check all that apply)	☐ Hired a parent liaison ☐ Formed a parent advisory committee ☐ Increased the number of parent activities at the school ☐ Increased the amount of communication from the school to parents ☐ Other (specify): ☐ No actions to increase parent involvement

Explanatory Notes:

Coordination of Resources

School Name/Location:	
1. How is CSR funding coordinated with other funding sources?	a. ☐ The implementation of the CSR reform model is clearly coordinated with multiple funding sources. b. ☐ The school has other funding sources, but they are not coordinated with CSR implementation.
2. Other funding sources at this school: (Check all that apply): a. ☐ Title I (Helping disadvantaged children meet high standards) b. ☐ Title II (Eisenhower Professional Development Program) c. ☐ Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools) d. ☐ Title VI (Innovative Education Program Strategies) e. ☐ Goals 2000 f. ☐ 21st Century Learning Grants g. ☐ Local Funds (specify): h. ☐ State Funds (specify): i. ☐ Other Funds (specify):	Other funding sources used to address CSR goals: (Check all that apply) a. ☐ Title I (Helping disadvantaged children meet high standards) b. ☐ Title II (Eisenhower Professional Development Program) c. ☐ Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools) d. ☐ Title VI (Innovative Education Program Strategies) e. ☐ Goals 2000 f. ☐ 21st Century Learning Grants g. ☐ Local Funds (specify): h. ☐ State Funds (specify): i. ☐ Other Funds (specify):
3. The school's CSR plan clearly indicates how CSR will be sustained following the termination of CSR funding.	☐ Yes ☐ No

Explanatory Notes:

Evaluation Strategies

School Name/Location:	
1. What data does the school use to evaluate student learning? (Check all that apply)	a. ☐ State assessment b. ☐ Student assessment recommended by model developer c. ☐ District-selected standardized test d. ☐ Student grades e. ☐ Student portfolios f. ☐ Other (specify):
2. To what extent are the above data used to modify school reform activities?	1 Little or no evidence that student evaluation data are used for program improvement 2 Some evidence that student evaluation data are used for program improvement 3 Strong evidence that student evaluation data are used for program improvement
3. How does the school evaluate implementation of new curriculum or instructional strategies?	
4. How does the school evaluate implementation of new school governance or management strategies?	
5. What external CSR evaluation activities has your school participated in? (Check all that apply)	a. ☐ Westat telephone survey b. ☐ Site visits or surveys from SEA staff c. ☐ Site visits or surveys from model developer d. ☐ School district evaluation of CSR e. ☐ Site visits or surveys from other agencies (specify):

Explanatory Notes:



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